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YEATS AND THE "UNKNOWN SUPERIORS": SWEDENBORG, FALK, AND CAGLIOSTRO

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A more accurate title for my paper would be "Yeats, Blake, and the Unknown Superiors," for my venture onto the quicksand of eighteenth-century Masonic history was stimulated by reading Yeats's editions of Blake's poetry.[1] At that time, back in 1973, Yeats seemed to understand Blake's bizarre symbolism and occult philosophy better than any other interpreter. However, Yeats's commentary on Blake was largely ignored by literary critics, who were embarassed by the Irish poet's credulity and who placed Blake in an uncomfortable historical context of Christian sentimentalism or Enlightenment liberalism. But Yeats named names, as he hinted at the esoteric sources of Blake's philosophy.

Thus, Blake was not only a Swedenborgian but a Kabbalist and Rosicrucian. Using the elliptical language demanded by his own Rosicrucian vows of secrecy, Yeats wrote about Blake:

> There is reason to believe that he acquired at this time some knowledge of the Kabala, and that he was not unacquainted with certain doctrines of the Rosicrucians. It is possible that he received initiation into an order of Christian Kabalists then established in London, and known as "The Hermetic Students of the G.D." [Golden Dawn]. Of course this conjecture is not susceptible of proof. He would have said nothing about such initiation even if he had received it. The "students" in question do not name themselves, or each other, and the subject of their study is nothing less than universal magic. . . his contemporary, the miniature painter Cosway, kept a house for the study and practice of magic, and left behind him at his death, a considerable bundle of magical formulae. . .It must have been at this time that he [Blake] acquired what he knew of Hebrew. Several of the names in the very earliest of his mythic books are direct adaptations from that tongue. He also used Hebrew characters on some of his designs, which show that he had learned the unfamiliar way of writing them, known to some occult students as the "Celestial Alphabet."[2]

Later, Yeats added a provocative name when he suggested that Blake joined "mystics and students of magic" in "an important secret body working in London under three brothers named Falk."[3] Yeats's primary source for this assertion was *The Royal Masonic Cyclopedia* (1875-1877), in which Kenneth Mackenzie gave a garbled account of three different Falks, who eventually emerged in Golden Dawn history as one man. Mackenzie, a founding member of the *Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia*, described first a Rabbi de Falk, who came to England in 1780 and became a famous Kabbalist; second, a Chain Chenul Falk or Dr Falcon, who lived in London for over thirty years and was "celebrated in Kabbalistical records;" and third, Johann Friedrich Falk, "son of the preceding" and possibly related to the first, who came from Hamburg to head a Kabbalistical College in London until his death in 1824.[4] Out of this muddle, Yeats came up with "three brothers named Falk."

But Yeats was not the only student of Rosicrucian history who was confused about Falk's identity. On 8 December 1888, Gustav Mommsen wrote to *Notes and Queries*:

> A SOCIETY OF KABBALISTS: – Johann F. Falk succeeded to the directorate of a secret society of students of the Kabbalah about 1810, in London, I believe. Its name was 'Chabrah Zereh aur bokher,' as nearly as Hebrew can be put into English. The late Eliphaz Lévi, of Paris, was concerned in it later on. Is this society still in existence?[5]

The question was answered by Yeats's friend Dr. Wynn Westcott on 9 February 1889:

> The order of mystics which gave Eliphaz Lévi (Abbé Constant) his occult knowledge, and of which Johann Falk was at one time the lecturer in London, is still at work in England. It is not a Masonic order, and there is no distinction between men and women students. The greatest privacy is maintained, and some knowledge of Hebrew is essential, but the whole course of study and experiment is so abstruse and complex that membership is very limited as to number, and the proceedings have no public interest. Its true name is only told to initiates, and the few outsiders who have heard of its existence only know of the society as 'The Hermetic Students of the G.D.'[6]

In 1900 Westcott reiterated his claim about the earlier Rosicrucian society and elaborated his identification of Falk:

> This college certainly existed for many years, and a famous city medical man called Falk, or Dr. Falcon, was for a long period its head, but I have

> no evidence that the members of this College were Freemasons. This College also related to some mystic teachers in Germany who used mottoes instead of proper names and wrote R.C. after their names, and were as such Rosicrucians.[7]

wever, by 1913, Westcott admitted that there were controversies about the sicrucian affiliation of Dr. Falk. Referring to a "lapsed" Rosicrucian College ngland in the 1830's, Westcott revealed:

> About fifty years ealier [ca. 1780] a certain eminent Jew named Falk, or Dr. Falcon, lived in London (a reference to whom will be found in the *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* by Kenneth Mackenzie) and was of high repute as a teacher of the Kabalah and of other studies of a Rosicrucian character; he was indeed said to have magical powers. Falk could not have been fully affiliated to any Rosicrucian College because he was a strict Jew, and the members of all true Rosicrucian Colleges have always been Christians. Kenneth Mackenzie classes Dr. Falk among the Rosicrucians of eminence, and certainly told me he had first-hand evidence of his connection with the Society; many Christian students have adopted a modification of the old Jewish Kabalah, so perhaps some Jews have been allied to the Christian Rosicrucians.[8]

Ellic Howe and Robert Gilbert, the scrupulous chroniclers of the murky tory of the Golden Dawn, warn of Mackenzie's mendacity and assume that ustav Mommsen" was a pseudonym for Westcott himself (who, in effect, ote both query and note).[9] However, the claims about Falk and the Kabbalists not be written off as mere figments of the Rosicrucian imagination. Almost iterated by the confusions of Golden Dawn legend is the actual historical ure, whose personality and purpose fascinated the theosophists of William ake's milieu as much as those of Yeats's circle. Moreover, the fact that Gustav ommsen is a German-Danish name and that Mackenzie had access to bbalistic-Rosicrucian traditions in Vienna suggests that they may indeed have mbled onto the strange history of Dr. Falk. To trace back their sources, wever, leads us into a thicket of multi-layered political and Masonic intrigues, ich are almost impenetrable to scholars because of the deliberate secrecy and struction of documents demanded of participants. The precise identity of ann F. Falk and his "brothers" is still a puzzle, but Yeats and Westcott were the right track. They just needed to go back further.

The Dr. Falk who had such an influence on Blake's Swedenborgian circle s Dr. Samuel Jacob Hayim Falk (1710?-1782), who lived in London for over ty years and who became a legend among Jewish and Christian Freemasons

interested in the occult.[10] In the last five years of his life, Falk played a significant role in an ambitious effort to develop a new form of Judaeo-Christian Freemasonry, in which there would be no conversionist pressures.[11] This effort went far beyond the basic tolerance of the English Grand Lodge system, for it involved the development of a new mystical religion which would utilize Kabbala to transcend all sectarian divisions. This courageous international project, which involved a small but powerful network of Masons, was largely buried by nineteenth-century historians – both Jewish and Gentile – until the pioneering research of Professors Gershom Scholem and Jacob Katz at the Hebrew University in Israel.[12] Their publications on Kabbalistic theosophy and its transmission by Jewish disciples of Sabbatai Zevi, the seventeenth-century "false messiah," provide vital clues to the mysteries of irregular or "illuminist" Freemasonry in the eighteenth century. As factual footholds appear in the quicksand of early Rosicrucian-Masonic history, the "Unknown Superiors" begin to emerge from the shadows of political polemics and occultist mythology to take on historical shape.

The search by theosophically-inclined Freemasons for the "secret science" of Kabbalism, and for adepts and manuscripts of the Jewish visionary tradition, goes back much further than Fraulein Sprengel's concoction of the Golden Dawn cypher manuscripts (or the concoction of Fraulein Sprengel by the Golden Dawn).[13] More unpleasantly, the accusation that secret networks of Jews exploited their Kabbalistic influence to carry out political and financial intrigues goes back much further than the infamous forgery of "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion." However, the assumption that this obsession with Kabbalism (and its unsavory counterpart in anti-Semitic innuendo) was confined to Germany has made its ramifications into English Freemasonry difficult to trace. But, early eighteenth-century British newspapers and periodicals, as well as surviving Masonic documents, are replete with references to Kabbalists, Rosicrucians, and Freemasons, whose differing political views led them into schismatic systems.

Later in the century, many Masonic seekers after Kabbalistic and Rosicrucian secrets believed that the primary sources were in London – or, more precisely, in Wellclose Square in the East End. It was in this small square that the real Dr. Falk revealed his celestial arcana to Swedenborg and Cagliostro. From there, it became the most secret teaching of the Swedenborgian Theosophical Society that Blake joined in the 1780's. As the French Revolution erupted, a series of sensational exposés and trials led the Inquisition at Rome to publish a lurid account of an unholy trio of *Illuminés* who allegedly fomented the Revolution – Cagliostro (then in an Inquisition prison) and his former Masonic colleagues Falk and Swedenborg.[14] Despite the paranoid tone and persecuting purpose of the Inquisition propaganda, the Holy Father sometimes knew what he

was talking about. Moreover, his charges were picked up, elaborated, and localized by contemporary news magazines in London.[15]

To unearth the process by which the banal atmosphere of Wellclose Square (now surrounded by high-rise housing projects) became the stuff of lurid legend, the historian must explore three areas of eighteenth-century Masonic history that have been largely ignored by academic and Masonic historians in England. The first is the infusion of Kabbalistic and, particularly, Sabbatian theosophy and symbolism into certain systems of irregular, high-degree Masonry. The second is the Jacobite usage of Masonic lodges in Europe and Sweden to organize the scattered opposition to England's Hanoverian government. The third is the philo-Semitic and ecumenical work of the Moravian Brotherhood, whose leader Count Zinzendorf often used London as the base for his quasi-Masonic, millenarian campaigns. By venturing into these strange offshoots of mainstream Freemasonry, the researcher comes across many clearly defined personalities who found the role of "Unknown Superiors" a practical expedient while playing dangerous political and magical games.

Yeats and his Golden Dawn colleagues were accurate in viewing William Blake's Kabbalism and Rosicrucianism within a Swedenborgian framework. In late eighteenth-century accounts, many contemporaries of Swedenborg portrayed him as "Chief of the *Illuminés,*" a major influence on the development of high-degree Masonry.[16] Though there is a strong oral tradition in Sweden that Swedenborg was a Freemason, there is apparently no surviving documentary proof of his initiation.[17] In 1870 the American Mason Samuel Beswick published his gleanings from that oral tradition, which form a perplexing mixture of important fact and misleading fiction.[18] Because he did not document his claims, Beswick has been generally relegated to the ranks of nostalgic fantasizers. But, like Mackenzie, Westcott, and Yeats, Beswick was onto something. Moreover, Yeats had access to the Swedish oral traditions through his friendship with Count Stenbock, whose family had been involved in high-degree Swedish Masonry for generations.[19] In the light of accumulating evidence on Sweden's cooperation with France in recurrent efforts to restore the Stuarts to the English throne, many puzzling incidents in Swedenborg's "Masonic" biography take on historical coherence.[20]

In 1868 L.P. Regnell, a Swedenborgian Mason in Sweden, claimed to have seen an old book of records of "the Chapter of Christianstad" which recorded a Masonic meeting on 5 June 1787, in Wittshöfle. Before an audience that included King Gustav III and Duke Carl of Soudermania (both illuminist Masons), the fortifications expert Baltazar Weduwar described Swedenborg's Masonic career:

> ...[Swedenborg] visited Charles XII at Altenstedt, in order to have the high order of Masonry introduced into Sweden...Mr. Wedemar (sic) himself had visited the lodge in London, which Swedenborg joined in the beginning of the year 1706 (?) and...the signature of his name is in the register of the lodge. The minutes further state that the king and the duke were both aware of the fact that Swedenborg had been a member of the order...The lodge which Swedenborg joined, and which bears his name [Emanuel], is No.6 in London.[21]

Because Swedenborg did not arrive in London until 1710, Beswick argued that Regnell and Tafel misread the French word "Lunden," which designated the city of Lund in Sweden, for the English capital.[22] He accepted the date of 1706, arguing that Swedenborg was initiated in a Scottish-rite lodge in Lund which allowed eighteen year-olds to join (Swedenborg was born in 1688). Regnell's transcription may have been faulty and Tafel's translation of Regnell's letter is full of mistakes; thus, it is possible that the year 1706 should read 1716, when Swedenborg was indeed in Lund and working on secret military projects for King Charles XII, in preparation for a Swedish-Jacobite expedition to Scotland.[23] Though Tafel accepted Regnell's claims in 1869, he later rejected them(without counter-documentation) when he published his *Documents Concerning Swedenborg* (1875-1877).[24] Since then, Regnell's account fell into oblivion and was not mentioned in subsequent New Church biographies of Swedenborg.

However, it is plausible that Swedenborg was not only initiated in Lund but also in London, during his residence in the latter city from 1710 to 1713. Among his known contacts, at least three – John Woodward, Hans Sloane, and J.T. Desaguliers – were Freemasons.[25] At that time, few records were kept in the shadowy lodges; moreover, the probability that Swedenborg joined a lodge with Jacobite sympathies makes its history even more difficult to trace. In the wake of successive Jacobite plots from 1709 to 1719, many records and manuscripts "at some private lodges" were "too hastily burnt by some scrupulous Brothers that those papers might not fall into strange hands."[26] Among the chief Jacobite conspirators during these years was Count Carl Gyllenborg, Swedish ambassador in London, who was a friend and political mentor of Swedenborg.[27] I argue elsewhere that Gyllenborg employed Swedenborg as a secret intelligence agent, courier, and code-maker during the complex negotiations in London, Paris, The Hague, and Swedish Pomerania, as the Jacobites pressured the Swedish king to lead the Pretender's forces in a surprise attack on the new Hanoverian king of England, George I.[28] That Gyllenborg and his co-conspirators Georg Goertz, Joachim Preis, Eric Sparre, Carl Gustaf Tessin, Theodore von Neuhof, James Keith, Charles Dillon, and the Duke of Ormonde allegedly became Freemasons lends credence to Nordmann's view that Jacobite Masonry provided the clandestine network of communication for the developing international enterprise.[29]

During his residences in England and on the Continent, in which he was *incognito* much of the time, Swedenborg studied many works on the Kabbalists, Rosicrucians, and Freemasons.[30] As a guidebook for his investigations, he relied on Georg Morhof's *Polyhistor Literarium* (Lübeck, 1708), in which Morhof provided a survey of the authors and societies who promoted "pansophia" and "polymathia."[31] In one chapter, "De Collegis Secretis," Morhof traced the history of secret colleges of occult wisdom, from the ancient Jewish schools of prophecy to the modern Rosicrucians. He viewed the Pythagorean fraternity, as described by Iamblichus, as a forerunner of the "Fratrum Roseae Crucis" and the "Collegio Maurorem" (or College of Masons).[32] He described the impact of Robert Fludd and John Heydon on the Rosicrucian fraternity and its sciences in England, and he praised Fludd as a "mirabilis ingenii homo," gifted in Kabbala, medicine, and mathematics. Morhof had visited the Royal Society of Sciences in London in 1670, when its guiding spirit was Sir Robert Moray (a Royalist, Freemason and student of Rosicrucianism), and his *Polyhistor* pointed backwards to the Stuart Restoration as the golden age of millenarian pansophia.[33]

Swedenborg also studied the collected works of John Wilkins, a protégé of Moray and member of the "Invisible College" and Royal Society.[34] Wilkins not only discussed the Kabbalistic and Rosicrucian learning of John Dee, Robert Fludd, and other great "scientists" accused of magic, but he showed that Kabbalistic number-letter manipulations could be used to develop secret diplomatic codes.[35] Wilkins warned that "the ignorance of Secret and Swift Conveyances" of diplomatic information "hath often proved fatal...to Whole Armies and Kingdoms" – words that later proved prophetic to Gyllenborg and the Swedish-Jacobite conspirators in 1716. After giving a learned history of cryptography and cipher-writing (drawing on the works of Hermes Trismegistus, Francis Bacon, and Trithemius), Wilkins described techniques for making disappearing inks and special papers to conceal messages. He then revealed that the real masters of secret communication were the Jews, whose "parabolical" techniques even influenced Jesus. By the science of "combinatio" or changing the places and powers of letters, the Jews can hide many messages in misleading exoteric statements. He also revealed methods of "secret discourse by signs and gestures," through certain positions of fingers and hands – techniques he had evidently learned from Moray and the Freemasons.

In two allegorical poems that Swedenborg wrote during his secretive mission in Paris and Pomerania, he hinted at his role as an espionage agent and mystical reformer. In *Camena Borea* (Griefeswald, 1715), Swedenborg utilized Ovidian fables "under cover of which are concealed all that has been going in Europe during the past fourteen or fifteen years."[36] He was determined that "the hidden messages underlying the *sensus externus*" would be difficult to decipher.[37]

In the final Fable XXII, he even explained that he chose the form of allegorica prose because "it is difficult to understand – in order to be careful, which i necessary"; it is a "literary form that is almost comparable to being silent."[38] I the same Fable, however, he verged dangerously on an explicit description of hi role as a spy among the diplomats and courtiers gathered at Versailles. Describin himself as a *vates* or seer, Swedenborg recounted the role of his *vatis factu infans* or little dog transformed into a child, who worked as a secret spy for hi master among the ladies of a court:

> The little dog...understood various expressions of people's will, their signs and speech, and it could tell its Master what it understood. Its owner, however, kept this skill of the dog secret, saying that it was a dog without the ability to speak, and he taught him pleasant frolics, with which he could win the favour of the girls...But the band of virgins did not as yet know that it could report their *talk* and their *secret actions* to its Master, that it could be the informer and spy of its seer and, sitting in their embraces kiss their ears in order that it might catch as closely as possible what they said between them. It was even sent to the feet of *Heroes* and *Military commanders*, and was seen to bite their heels and to withdraw at once, so that it might not perchance be violently pushed back and get a wound that would deprive it of life.[39]

Helander suggests that Swedenborg was influenced by the allegories c Dryden, Swift, and Arbuthnot (who cleverly veiled their Restoration, Rosicrucia and Jacobite themes).[40] However, Swedenborg seemed to draw more on Pope' *Rape of the Lock* (1714), in which Belinda's flirtations concealed a seriou message of "magical politics."[41] That Pope chose a "machinery" of Rosicrucia nymphs and spirits to express his Jacobite themes is relevant to Swedenborg' poetic strategy. According to Helander, Swedenborg made a coded reference t John Dee's *Monas Hieroglyphica* when he used the Latin words *pingvissimo* an *rore,* which drew on Dee's statement, *De rore caeli, e pingvedine terrae, det til Deus.*[42] As Yates argues, Dee used the line from Genesis XXVII – "God give the of the dew of heaven and the fatness of the land"– to illustrate the theme of "th descending dew *(ros)* uniting heaven and earth."[43] Dee's motto was subsequentl included in the Rosicrucian manifestoes, which Swedenborg had read about i England.

In another allegorical poem, *Festivus Applausus* (Griefeswalde, 1715 Swedenborg celebrated the sensational escape of the Swedish king, Charles XI from imprisonment in Turkey and his heroic horseback ride to Stralsund i November 1714. As Swedenborg's friends Gyllenborg, Sparre, and Preis dre closer to the Jacobites – in their growing hatred of Hanoverian England – h

eulogy to their "King by the Grace of God" would have found receptive readers among the mystical royalists.[44] Praising Charles XII as "the Phoenix of the Ancient Gothic Race and the Monarch of our North," Swedenborg presented a kind of millenarian apotheosis of the king. Drawing on the doctrines of metempsychosis of the Pythagoreans, neo-Platonists, and Kabbalists, he portrayed Charles as the reincarnation of the great classical heroes.[45] Just when Sweden seemed to have degenerated hopelessly, "at that moment, because of some hidden structure of Fate and the recurrent influence of Heaven, CHARLES, the leader and hero of our North was ordered to be born again in this very age in which we now live, ordered to rise...as PHOENIX." Now taking up his true millenarial role, Charles has returned to his lands and thus initiated the restoration of the Golden Age. Supernatural portents of sun and moon greeted him. "O, readers," Swedenborg exhorted, "will you not then refuse to believe that Heaven does not, by a secret flowing, influence our actions, our lives, and the vicissitudes of fortune? I have myself no doubts about this."[46] With the king's return, the Rosicrucian healing of land and people can begin, that will bring man and God back into their harmonous unity.

While meeting with military officers and diplomatic couriers who served the Swedish king, Swedenborg worked on his drawings and projects to aid the Swedish war effort. Among practical and imaginative suggestions for new air guns, water pumps, drawbridges, flame-throwers, submarines, and airplanes, Swedenborg included "A method of conjecturing the wills and affections of men's minds by means of analysis" – apparently an outgrowth of his experiences in espionage.[47] In June 1715, as the Jacobites and their Franco-Swedish supporters planned the "Rising of 1715," Charles XII valiantly but hopelessly defended Stralsund against enemy bombardments. Swedenborg accompanied the wife of Casten Feif, a Swedish military officer, home to the relative safety of Sweden.[48] Like so many of Charles's favorite officers, Feif was an exiled Scot who saw his native country's fate linked with that of Sweden. Over the next few years, Swedenborg became increasingly enmeshed in the Scottish-Swedish plot as he worked with Christopher Polhem on secret military projects for Charles XII. In these efforts lay the seeds of the tradition that Swedenborg was one of the "Unknown Superiors" of *Ecossais* Masonry.

After Charles XII escaped from the defeated Stralsund and temporarily called off his Norwegian campaign, he set up military camp at Lund in late 1716. There he was joined by Polhem and Swedenborg, who participated in the royal entourage as military engineers. The king gave full powers to Baron Georg Heinrich Görtz, a brilliant diplomat from Holstein, to reorganize Sweden's government and to develop a more effective international coalition against England. In the 1770's, Elis Schröderheim (a Freemason and secretary to King

Gustav III) recorded his belief that Görtz and his associate Georg
introduced a new form of Masonry into Sweden in order to further these p
designs.[49] More recently, Nordmann argued that Swedish officers
Royal-Sparre regiment (led by Eric Sparre) joined with the Jacobites
military lodges in France in the years 1716-1719.[50] These arguments giv
plausibility to Beswick's claim, based on oral traditions, that Masonic lod
encampments were formed on the battlefield in the army of Charles XII
Swedenborg may well have been involved in the Masonic effort in Sw
suggested by his work for Görtz and Eckleff on secret military p
connected with the projected expedition to Scotland.[52] Moreover, Eckle
Karl Frederick allegedly used his father's Masonic documents to later o
the famous *Chapître Illuminé* in Stockholm, which incorporated Swedenl
theosophy into its lodge rituals.[53]

Provocatively, this early Masonic initiative in Sweden already had ov
of Jewish mysticism. General Stanislaus Poniatowski, the trusted confida
military adviser of Charles XII, came from an area of Poland where Sal
Kabbalism flourished, and he was half-Jewish himself. Nordmann and M
suggest that Poniatowski brought to the Jacobite-Masonic effort in Sw
romantic, millenarial vision of ecumenical "Orientalism."[54] Accord
Poniatowski and his agents, the three threatened but "legitimate" k
Europe – Charles XII of Sweden, Stanislas Leszcynski of Poland, and
Stuart of Scotland – should unite to restore not only their kingdoms
Temple of Jerusalem and universal religion. Frequently using mystical, M
terminology in their secret correspondence, Poniatowski and his clan
network wrote of "le confident du grand Sacrificateur qui veut relever le
David."[55] They further vowed, "C'est en bois et fer scandinave que le Ter
Salomon devait être ériger par l'Alexandre du Nord."[56]

During his captivity in Turkey, the Swedish king became a great a
of Daniel de Fonseca, a Jewish physician and diplomat, who assisted
difficult diplomatic tasks.[57] A former member of the Marrano commu
Bordeaux, Fonseca had been raised as a Christian and educated for the prie
When he moved to Turkey, he resumed his Jewish identity in an area wh
ecumenical Kabbalism of Sabbatai Zevi flourished. Inspired by his conta
Jews in the relatively tolerant Moslem communities, the Swedish king
Hebrew and sent important expeditions to the Holy Land to collect Jew
Oriental manuscripts. Advised by his financial advisers Feif, Grothus
Silferkrantz that Sweden would benefit from Jewish immigration, th
determined to welcome Jews to Sweden and to grant them freedom of r
(thus overturning the royal ban of 1685).[58]

After the king's return, a party of Jews followed him to Sweden, where ' took up residence near his encampment. At the same time, the Swedish assadors Gyllenborg, Preis, and Sparre also benefited from the services of ıcis Francia, later known as "the Jacobite Jew," who acted as a secret courier fund-raiser for the Swedish-Jacobite plot.[59] Francia was allegedly a Freemason, ch may explain the references to his "noble society" and "royal club" of Jews supported the Stuart effort.[60] As part of the king's entourage, Swedenborg ed the philo-Semitism and millenarial fervor of Poniatowski and his military workers. He offered his expertise in Hebrew and the "Oriental languages" to king's service, and he made his own contribution to the mystical rationale of Jacobite campaign.[61]

Swedenborg determined to prove "scientifically" that Olof Rudbeck's astic *Atlantica* (1697-1702) presented a true vision of Sweden's divinely ained role.[62] For admirers of Charles XII (later known as the Carolinians), the *ntica* served as "a patriotic evangel, animated by a veritable Nordic sianism," which linked the histories of Sweden and Palestine in a linguistic, hological, and spiritual destiny.[63] From the start of his spectacular military paign in Europe, and throughout his captivity in the East, Charles XII had voked a spate of millenarial prophecies about his heaven-appointed role. edenborg's own father, who spoke with his tutelary angels in Hebrew, licized these royalist prophecies, for he believed that the king's "crusade" leading to the imminent conversion of the Jews.[64] However, the arrest of Carl lenborg in January 1717, the tragic death of Charles XII in December 1718 and vindictive execution of Görtz in March 1719 ushered in a power struggle and itical persecution that prevented any further development of philo-Semitic emasonry in Sweden until the 1730's.

Despite this setback, Swedenborg's experiences in England and Europe provided him with Jacobite-Masonic contacts and Kabbalistic-Rosicrucian rature that would become increasingly important to his later theosophical elopment. Through the loyalty of his friends Gyllenborg, Tessin, Preis, and ure to the Stuart cause, Swedenborg was party to the strangely prolonged ension in Swedish political life of the "never-say-die" Jacobite crusade. In t, just as Grand Lodge-Hanoverian Freemasonry probably developed in ndon as a reaction to the Swedish-Jacobite plot of 1717-1719, so Swedish uminist" Freemasonry developed as a deliberate counter-movement to the glish system in 1735-1745.[65] From the time when Whig supporters of George noved to unify and control the scattered London lodges in 1717-1723, a ergent underground system continued to focus on Kabbalistic, Rosicrucian, l Jacobite interests.[66]

While Swedenborg and his political allies suffered political persecution [illegible] occupational disenfranchisement in Sweden during the 1720's, the Jacobites

continued their recurrent weaving of plots and counterplots – aided by Francia, who had been arrested by the British government but acquitted by a London jury hostile to Hanoverian foreign policy.[67] Erik Sparre kept up his contacts with the Pretender, and he was evidently privy to new Masonic initiatives by the Jacobites in London and Paris. The major stimulus to these efforts was the "Chevalier" Andrew Michael Ramsay, celebrated biographer of Fenelon, who developed the Masonic "Gormogons" into a mystically-oriented system that competed with the London Grand Lodge.[68] After examining the Stuart Papers at Windsor, Fay claimed that when Ramsay went to Rome in 1724 as tutor to Prince Charles Edward Stuart, his main objective was to reveal to the Pope and Pretender "the true religion and its teaching within Freemasonry."[69] However, James seemed to distrust Masonry, especially in the light of growing Hanoverian influence in the lodges. He later recorded his reactions to Ramsay's proposals in Rome: "Ramsay is an odd body. He exposed himself strangely here to myself and to others, but as yet I will be charitable enough to think him a mad man."[70]

Ramsay's strange "madness" probably consisted of his universalist and theosophical views, based on his studies in Jewish mystical traditions, which he hoped to incorporate into new Masonic degrees. The Oxford classicist Joseph Spence, a Freemason and friend of many Jacobites in England and Italy, recounted Ramsay's contact with an unorthodox Jew in Italy:

> The (outward) Rabbi Mr. R.[Ramsay] met with in Italy. – What do you think of Moses? – He was a great juggler. – What of Mahomet? *Un sclerato*. – What of Spinoza? *Un sceleratissimo*. – What of Jesus? *Un grande philosopho*. – (Jews in Italy not punished for speaking against Jesus, but punishable for speaking against Moses. – R.[Ramsay].[71]

Ramsay apparently met with Dr. Joseph Attias, a learned and cosmopolitan Jew, who shared an interest in Kabbalistic and magical literature with his fellow Masons in northern Italy.[72] Ramsay's odd dialogue suggests that the Jew was a secret adherent of Sabbatai Zevi, whose Kabbalistic antinomianism allowed for vilification of Moses and praise of Jesus. At the time of Ramsay's residence in Italy, small study circles of these Jewish mystics began to proliferate in northern Italy, where they were persecuted by orthodox rabbis.[73] Ramsay told Spence that "a man who would be well acquainted with the Jewish antiquities should read the *Cabala Reserata*, Basnage, and the *Moeurs du Israelites* by Fleury."[74]

In 1725, after Ramsay returned to Paris, a new Jacobite lodge opened under the leadership of Charles Radclyffe, Fourth Earl of Derwentwater. It was pointedly named "St. Thomas," after the martyred Becket who found refuge in France from the persecutions of Henry II.[75] Ramsay evidently helped to develop a mystical third degree, and some of the brethren dabbled in alchemy and

Kabbalism.[76] In London, the Jacobite poet John Byrom (initiated in 1726) recorded lively conversations about the Rosicrucians and his desire to form a "Cabala Club" among interested lodge brethren.[77] These "occult" political developments stirred an anonymous pamphleteer to attack the new lodges of Masons and schismatic Gomorgons as heretics, who "assume to themselves the August Title of Kabalists."[78] But, he charged, they are really "Gnosticks, who took their original from Simon Magus," who fascinate their followers with "superstitious Interpretations, extravagant Talismanical characters, and abstruse Significations, of uncommon Kabalistick Words, which exactly agree with the Proceedings of our Modern Free Masons."

With France still bound to the Hanoverian Alliance, the French government under Cardinal Fleury kept a wary eye on the Jacobite lodges in Paris, which maintained a discreet existence after the flamboyant Grand Master, the Jacobite Duke of Wharton, returned to Spain in 1729. Then, in 1731, as Fleury's ministerial rival Germain Louis de Chauvelin pressured King Louis XV to withdraw from the uncomfortable alliance with England, the Jacobite lodge revived, with James Hector Macleane as new Grand Master. Chauvelin, himself a Mason, and the Jacobites hoped to revitalize France's ancient ties with Sweden. Thus, in May 1731, when the Swedish Count Axel Eric Wrede-Sparre was initiated into the Jacobite lodge in Paris, it signalled a renewed Masonic effort to link up the multi-national opposition to George II.[79] Son of Eric Sparre, who had been initiated earlier in a Jacobite military lodge, Wrede-Sparre was sponsored by his father's old friends in Paris.

This new initiative probably provoked Wrede-Sparre's brother-in-law, Carl Gustaf Tessin, to join with other opponents of the Hanoverian Alliance to organize the quasi-Masonic, secret society of *Awazu och Wallassis* in January 1732. Like Ramsay's "new Masons," the *Awazu* brethren called themselves "Chevaliers" and yearned for the return of the Jacobite-Carolinian "golden age." The opposition journalist and *Awazu* enthusiast Olof von Dalin hinted at a secret mystical symbolism that the knights had learned from their fathers. Under the frivolous façade of the meetings, a serious political operation was carried out as Tessin and the brethren supported Carl Gyllenborg's efforts to break Sweden away from its unprofitable alliance with England. Then, in February 1733, the emerging political polarization in Sweden came to a head when Augustus II, the Saxon king of Poland, died – thus setting off an international struggle for the Polish succession. Jacobites, "Chauvelinistes," and Polish nationalists united with the overwhelming majority of Swedes to support the claim of Stanislaus Leszczynski for the throne, which he had earlier occupied thanks to the military support of Charles XII.[80]

Swedenborg and Benzelius shared the enthusiasm of Tessin, Gyllenborg, and the *Awazu* for a Swedish policy of military support for Stanislaus, revenge

against Russia, and a strong French alliance. I argue elsewhere that Swedenbo was sent on a dangerous espionage mission to Prussia, Saxony, and Bohemia, which he investigated the military challenges that would face Swedish troo and contacted potential allies for Stanislaus's campaign.[81] During this missic Swedenborg also explored new developments in alchemy, Kabbalism, a Masonry, which gave him significant qualifications for a role as an agent Franco-Swedish diplomacy. As Lindh documented in his important study Swedenborg's financial affairs, it was probably in 1734 that Swedenborg becar a paid secret agent of the French king, who was struggling against Fleury stubborn pacifism to support the campaign of Stanislaus, father of Louis XV wife and queen.[82] A large contingent of Swedish volunteers joined Stanislau forces at Danzig, where Poniatowski, Lubomirski, Czapski, Czartorisky, a other Freemasons joined the newly elected King of Poland – who was almc certainly a Mason himself.[83]

While Swedenborg was exploring the diplomatic theater of the Poli crisis, Wrede-Sparre returned to Sweden where he and Tessin transformed t *Awazu* fraternity into a French-affiliated *Ecossais* lodge in 1734. According t later account by Swedenborg's friend and political ally Carl Frederik Scheff Wrede-Sparre drew together earlier members of Franco-Jacobite lodges as revived the Masonry of Charles XII's era:

> Depuis bien des années, il s'est trouvé ici [Sweden] des vrais frères, qui quoique dispersés sur la face de Terre, n'en étoient pas moins eclairés et munis de'autorité pour communiquer la lumière à des profanes qu'ils jugoient dignes de leur confiance. Leur prudence ne leur permettoit pas dabord d'y procéder qu'avec une extrême circonspection pour pressentir les dispositions de la nation et le Frère Comte Wrede Sparre fut le premier qui réunit nos Frères dispersés.[84]

After Danzig fell to the Russians and Stanislaus fled with Gene Stenflycht (a close friend of Swedenborg) to a refuge with the Grand Master the Teutonic Knights at Königsberg, Swedenborg returned to Sweden a warned of France's failure (under Fleury's leadership) to keep its promises support to the Swedish and Polish nationalists.[85] Like Gyllenborg and Tessin, hoped a new ministry in France would provide more propitious "conjuncture for a revitalized alliance between France, Poland, Sweden, and the Jacobite

In July 1736 Swedenborg set off on another sensitive intelligence missi to Paris, once again using his scientific research and publications as a cov Since his visit to the Jewish ghetto of Prague and his increasing immersion Hermetic literature, Swedenborg had been experimenting with various telepat and trance states.[86] While in Hamburg, he pursued his investigations into Jewi

mysticism by inspecting the great library of Hebraica collected by Johan Christoph Wolf, a philo-Semite and correspondent of Benzelius.[87] Wolf possessed not only ancient Jewish works on Kabbala but also the later interpretative works of Robert Fludd, Knorr von Rosenroth, Detlev Cluverus, and George Wächter.[88] Swedenborg may also have examined the rare seventeenth-century volumes by Rabbi Jacob Jehuda Leon, whose publications on the Jerusalem Temple became central to the revival of "Ancient" Celtic Masonry that took place in Swedenborg's neighborhood in London in the 1750's.[89] According to the Irish advocate of "Ancient" Masonry, Rabbi Leon was a Mason and designed the coat of arms for the Grand Lodge under the Stuart king, Charles II.[90] Moving on to Hanover, Swedenborg visited the Jewish synagogue and recorded the Hebrew inscription over the door: "This is the entrance gate to Jehovah."[91]

In Hanover – now enemy territory – Swedenborg combined investigation of Jewish lore with surveillance of the visiting English king, George II, his military defenses, and post house (where Sweden's diplomatic correspondence was regularly intercepted).[92] Arriving in Amsterdam, Swedenborg called upon George Clifford and Sons, bankers of Scottish descent who shared the Franco-Jacobite sympathies of the "Hats."[93] As we shall see, a member of the Clifford family probably contributed to the tradition of "Unknown Superiors" when he participated in the Jacobite initiation of Baron von Hund, who subsequently founded the *Ecossais* rite of Strict Observance in Germany.[94] Like many Amsterdam financiers, Swedenborg experimented with Cabalistic meditation techniques and he recorded his achievement of some kind of psychic trance while in the city.[95] From this point on, however, his journal has significant gaps, where his heirs tore out the pages. Swedenborg's biographers have assumed that he recorded his erotic dreams but it is more likely that his diary included dangerous political information.[96]

Arriving in Paris in September 1736, Swedenborg was at the center of important Masonic activities that would reverberate in Swedish and Jacobite political history for the next fifty years. He moved into the Hotel d'Hambourg on Rue du Four, a street where visitors from Sweden, Scotland, Poland and Italy gathered at the local Masonic lodge.[97] Moreover, two lodges that Swedenborg probably visited met right around the corner at Rue de Bussy and Rue de Boucheries. Thus, Beswick's claim that in 1736 Swedenborg visited Derwentwater's lodge at Rue de Boucheries is plausible.[98] Swedenborg immediately called upon the Swedish ambassador Niklas Peter Gedda, who was greatly distrusted by Gyllenborg, Tessin, and the pro-French party (the "Hats") in Sweden. Since Swedenborg first met Gedda during the Swedish-Jacobite intrigues of 1714, Gedda had become a paid informant for the Hanoverian government in England.[99] Swedenborg may have been instructed by Tessin to

find out whether Gedda's intimacy with Cardinal Fleury had contributed to th French failure to support the Swedish troops at Danzig. Certainly, Swedenborg friend General Stenflycht, who joined him at the Hotel d'Hambourg would hav been eager to know what role Gedda played in the Polish disaster.[100]

Stenflycht had just arrived in Paris, after escorting Stanislaus from his lon refuge at Königsberg to his uncomfortable meeting with Louis XV at Meudo in June.[101] Since Stanislaus had been forced to abdicate by Fleury (with Lou XV's grudging consent), Stenflycht had struggled to get financial help for th Swedish officers stranded at Königsberg. Stanislaus himself was now staying Versailles, *incognito,* where his daughter, the estranged wife of Louis XV, tri to comfort him. The French queen was grateful and generous to her father's loy Swedish and Polish supporters, many of whom had come to Paris to regrou Stenflycht may have taken Swedenborg to meet Stanislaus and the queen Versailles, for Swedenborg later recorded a dream-memory of his conversati with the Polish king and his daughter. Swedenborg's later "spirit-talks," whi he wove into his journals and published works, were always rooted in h real-world experiences. He described King Stanislaus "in a company where h was, and in which no one knew that it was he; for it was the delight of his life th he wished to be in companies incognito."[102] Swedenborg later revealed J.C.Cuno that Stanislaus "led him to his daughter, the late Queen of France." In another dream memory, Swedenborg described the French queen as humb and reverent to him.[104]

Chauvelin, Stanislaus's most important supporter in the French governmen urged the disaffected partisans of the Polish "Pretender" to link their cause wi the Scottish Jacobites and Swedish "Hats." As a Freemason himself, Chauvel may have encouraged many of the refugees and diplomatic agents from th Polish war to utilize the Parisian lodges as a secretive, ecumenical meeting plac It is almost certain that Swedenborg participated in these Masonic politi though the detailed case must be presented elsewhere.[105] Briefly, howev Swedenborg's visits to the *Enclos de Templiers* and its Grand Prior (the Mason Prince de Conti), his collaboration with Carl Frederik Scheffer (who w initiated into two Parisian lodges headed by Villeroy and Derwentwater), h usage of Ramsay's Masonic themes of "illuminated" knighthood, and the lat account of his arrest at a Masonic lodge all point to his participation in Mason developments during his eighteen-month stay in Paris.[106]

When Scheffer returned to Stockholm in autumn 1737, he carried with hi a Masonic patent to establish *Ecossais* lodges in Sweden.[107] As Yeats may ha learned later, the lodge meetings were held in the palace of the Stenbock fami in tribute to the great military hero who served Charles XII.[108] Probably becau of recent anti-Semitic actions by the Swedish government, Scheffer eviden

structed Derwentwater to reword the statement of tolerance (which allowed ws to join English Craft Masonry) in order to present Swedish Masonry as rely Christian.[109] If Swedenborg and Scheffer attended lodge meetings where umsay delivered his oration on the secret Jewish roots and Templar ramifications *Ecossais* Masonry, they would have realized that the present Swedish vernment would not tolerate such a "Judaized" secret society in Sweden.

In one manuscript version of his Masonic oration (which was not published til the twentieth-century), Ramsay stressed the Jewish origins of the Order, for e "arcane science could be preserved pure only amongst God's people."[110] The cret science of Kabbalism was handed down by oral tradition, "from Noah and e Patriarchs" but was corrupted when the Jews were in Egypt. At the building the Second Temple, the Grand Master of the Lodge at Jerusalem deposited ne mysterious Book of Solomon" in the foundations. After the destruction of e Second Temple by Cyrus, the book was lost until discovered by the crusading mplars. "The Sacred Code was deciphered and, without fathoming the blime meaning of the hieroglyphs which were written there, our ancient order as revived." Significantly, Ramsay omitted the Jewish section when he sent the ation to Fleury for approval, in preparation for his planned initiation of King uis XV.

Swedenborg not only had access to this revived Jewish-Templar-Jacobite asonry through Stenflycht, Scheffer, and their colleagues, but he also worked th two important Masonic bankers in Paris – Fleury Tourton and Jean ristoph Baur – who merged mystical with monetary affairs.[111] Heads of the otestant Bank, the two financiers had the confidence of Louis XV, and they re often entrusted with secret diplomatic dealings in support of cobite-Polish-Swedish affairs.[112] Tourton had earlier acted as a financial agent Lord Mar in the Swedish-Jacobite plot of 1716.[113] Baur had recently handled e secret monetary transactions to Stanislaus's supporters at Danzig, and vedenborg's visit may have concerned the delayed French subsidy to the vedish officers who fought in Poland. As a Freemason, Baur played a leading le in initiating foreign members who participated in Chauvelin's international plomatic schemes. He sponsored Scheffer's entrance into the "Villeroy" dge, and he soon handled the French subsidies to Tessin and the "Hats" in veden.[114] According to Lindh, Swedenborg also received a secret subsidy paid t of Louis XV's private account; it was most likely managed by Baur.[115] When vedenborg left Paris for Italy, he was evidently accompanied by André rnkranz, Baur's brother-in-law and banking partner.[116]

I argue elsewhere that Swedenborg and Firnkranz carried out a diplomatic d Masonic mission for Scheffer and Baur that would eventually furnish aterials for the developing Jewish-Jacobite traditions of the "Unknown

Superiors."[117] Luthy describes Baur as "le troublante figure," whose combination of political, financial, and occult interests prepared "l'avénement des grand charlatans de la fin de la siècle autant que celui de la révolution."[118] Pointing to Baur's "curieux visiteurs des pays nordiques," Luthy raises questions about Baur's contribution to the later myths of Masonic conspiracies. Were his activities in secret diplomacy a prelude to the development of "un complot sinistre monté par un 'Anti-France'"?

> ...c'est, exactement parallèle a l'ahurissant roman de conspiration internationale philosophical-maconnique monté dans le procès de Cagliostro, l'intuition d'une vaste conjuration philosophical-protestante evoquée sans conclure, au Consistoire sécrét des juin 1793...Littérature demoniaques et de mythomanes, comme il en traîne dans les poubelles de tous les pays, sur le modéle des Protocoles des Sages de Sion?[119]

Luthy's uneasy perception of the seeds of the Masonic conspiracy myth in the activities of bankers like Baur was written in 1961, with the painful hindsight of the exploitation of that myth by the Nazis. But, contemporary onlookers of Masonic events in 1737 voiced similar concerns. In April 1737, one "Jachin" wrote to the *Gentleman's Magazine* to argue for the suppression of the Masonic order in England. Hinting at Masonic involvement in the Porteous Riots in Scotland, the writer condemned Freemasonry as a subversive military organization. Worse, the Masons "admit not only Turks, Jews, and Infidels, but even Jacobites, Nonjurors, and Papists." Then, in a question that would have insidious echoes in the next centuries, he asked:

> They make no Scruple to acknowledge that there is a Distinction between Prentices and Master-Masons; and who knows whether they may not have an higher Order of Cabalists, who keep the grand Secret of All intirely [sic] to themselves?[120]

Before Swedenborg left Paris, he probably heard about new developments in Jacobite Masonry in England and Italy. In September 1737, his brother-in-law Eric Benzelius initiated a correspondence with Francis Drake, M.D., a Jacobite who was a leading member of the "Ancient" rite of Freemasonry in York.[121] Probably due to Derwentwater's secretive visits to England in 1736-1737, there was a significant revival of York Masonry, which condemned Hanoverian Grand Lodge members as modern schismatics.[122] As Ramsay and the *Ecossais* lodges in France developed the Templar higher degrees, the chivalric symbolism found its way into the York rituals.[123] Beswick claimed that the Swedish Masons adopted the York custom that allowed the setting up of independent lodges

wherever and whenever they wanted.[124] About the same time as Benzelius's overture to Drake, Swedenborg was apparently visited in Paris by Carl Johan Cronstedt – a protégé of Benzelius – who had recently joined the Jacobite lodge in Rome.[125] Cronstedt had carried out artistic, architectural, and military studies for his patron Tessin, and he reported to Benzelius on his experiences when he returned to Sweden in November 1737.[126]

Cronstedt's companions in initiation were two French military officers, who were sympathetic to a Stuart restoration. He probably informed Swedenborg about the lodge, with its mixture of Catholic and Protestant Jacobites and foreign supporters, and he must have directed Swedenborg to the Hotel of the Three Kings in the Strada Paolina, where the Jacobite lodge met and where Swedenborg initially took lodgings in Rome.[127] Swedenborg spent much time with a Swedish expatriate, Count Nils Bielke, who was the brother-in-law of the *Ecossais* Masons Tessin and Wrede-Sparre.[128] Bielke had converted to Catholicism and was made a Senator of Rome by the Pope. Through his access to Jacobite circles, Bielke may have introduced Swedenborg to the Pretender and the two Stuart princes, for Swedenborg later referred to his conversation with a King "who was afterwards in a chamber" and "the princes, his sons."[129] Because English citizens were subject to treason charges if they contacted James Stuart, he often utilized a secret chamber to meet Jacobite plotters and their foreign associates. Swedenborg remembered that he "felt bashful from love and veneration," when he met the young princes – a sentiment that would have been shared by many Swedes in the presence of the Stuarts.

On 5 October 1738, Swedenborg recorded in his laconic travel journal: "I saw the palace where the Pretender lives, which is almost opposite to that occupied by the French embassy."[130] Though the details of Swedenborg's diplomatic liaison between the Jacobites and the French must be told elsewhere, it is important to this inquiry into the "Unknown Superiors" to note that Fleury had changed his tune and was currently encouraging the Jacobites. He assured them that Louis XV would back an attack on England and Scotland, *if* they were supported by Swedish troops.[131] When Drummond of Balhaldy, from an old Scottish Masonic family, arrived in Paris to confer with Fleury, the Cardinal argued that a "body of Swedish troops would be more acceptable to the Scots because of their religion, than if any French troops were sent to Scotland." Fleury admitted that he was "sensible of the great hatred the English bore the French,"

> ...and for that reason proposed to the Spanish ambassador at Paris, Campo Florido, that provided his master would take 10,000 Swedes into his pay he would endeavour to procure them by means of some of the chief nobility [of Sweden], the [Swedish] King [Frederik I] not being to be trusted on that

> head as he was looked upon as friends to the Family of Hanover and would take care to have them [Swedish troops] transported.[132]

As one of the "chief nobility" of Sweden, Swedenborg may have been se as Louis XV's secret agent to the Jacobites in Italy. From Sweden, his Mason friends Tessin and Nils Palmstierna arranged a clandestine mission to th Jacobites in Spain in early spring 1739, which may explain Swedenborg's oc statement that he once revealed his spiritual message to personages in Spain. After Swedenborg returned to Paris in May 1739, Tessin and Scheffer arrived August where they worked tirelessly with the Spanish ambassador, Bau Ramsay, and the Jacobite-Masonic network to organize the emerging internation enterprise.[134]

Swedenborg also brought from Italy a collection of Hermetic ar Kabbalistic hieroglyphs or talismans, that were published after his death by Ca Frederik Nordenskjöld in *Oneiromäntien* (Stockholm, 1783) – a work printe under a Masonic aegis. Swedenborg had apparently collected them during h journeys to the Jewish communities of northern Italy, where the great Kabbalist poet Moses Luzzatto had recently led a revival of Sabbatian mysticism.[135] In th decades after Swedenborg's return from Italy, the Swedish rite of Mason developed a secret tradition that "the highest Masonic truth was hidden in th hieroglyphic language of the old Judaic wisdom books."[136] This illumini tradition was brought to London by Carl Nordenskjöld, his brother Augustu and Dr. Gumpertz Levison (a Jewish alchemist), who played important roles the Swedenborg Society that Blake joined in the 1780's.[137] (By happy coincidenc Mrs. O.W. Nordenskjöld – a famous Swedenborgian and descendent of th brothers – entertained Yeats in Stockholm when he received the Nobel prize 1923).[138]

In the 1750's, illuminist Masons in Sweden claimed that the prima source for their hieroglyphic system was the Masonic lodge at Florence, fro where the German engraver Laurent Natter brought some Kabbalistic manuscrip to Stockholm in 1744-1745.[139] That Swedenborg almost certainly visited t lodge at Florence and that he also brought Kabbalistic manuscripts to Swed from Italy was a carefully guarded secret. Probably because of his dangerous a sensitive diplomatic work, Swedenborg's role in the development of the illumin system in Sweden has been deliberately veiled – thus contributing to h shadowy reputation as an "Unknown Superior." However, Swedenborg's ti with *Rose-Croix* Freemasons in Italy continued until 1765.[140]

When Swedenborg returned to Sweden in October 1740, he found a ne political regime in place – dominated by his Masonic friends in the pro-Fren "Hat" party. Under the leadership of Carl Gyllenborg, Tessin, Scheffer, a

Benzelius, the "Hats" were determined to revive the Swedish golden age in a Carolinian renaissance. Impelled by the millenarian nationalism of Charles XII and by their hatred of Hanoverian England, the ambitious political leaders called on a sometimes reluctant Swedenborg to repeat his feats of secret intelligence and diplomatic work. In 1744, when Swedenborg again set out on a mission to the Continent, the tradition of "Unknown Superiors" received a new impetus as rumors of Jewish adepts merged with rumors of the Young Pretender's role as the secret Grand Master of the Templars.

While he was in Rome, Swedenborg may have learned that Prince Charles Edward Stuart showed great interest in Freemasonry, despite the Papal Bull against the fraternity in 1738.[141] The prince repeatedly asked his father to allow him to be initiated but James refused.[142] According to the traditions of many *Ecossais* lodges, Charles Edward defied his father and secretly became the "Worshipful Master" of the Roman lodge. Though no evidence survives to support the claim, the Stuart prince later insisted that "the secret Grand Mastership of the Masons was hereditary in the house of Stuart, and that papers hidden at St.Germain would affirm it."[143] This tradition of Stuart Masonry was believed fervently in Sweden, where the lodges claimed to possess papers proving the Grand Mastership of the Young Pretender.[144] In 1783 the Swedish king,Gustav III, even travelled to Italy to meet the secret Grand Master, and Charles Edward gave him a patent that would transfer the office to Gustav in the event of his own death.

This Jacobite-Swedish tradition throws a startling light on Swedenborg's subsequent references to Jacobites and knights of the Temple in his journals and published works. In 1741, while Ramsay utilized Freemasonry in Paris to recruit supporters for a second Stuart restoration, he revealed to his good friend Tessin his belief that the first restoration (of Charles II) had been determined at a Masonic meeting, "General Monk finding this a convenient way of making his secret plans."[145] Two years later, a Prussian nobleman – Baron von Hund – came to Paris where he was made a "Knight of the Temple" in a Jacobite lodge by the mysterious "Knight of the Red Feather," while Lords Kilmarnock and Clifford attended.[146] As noted earlier, Clifford was probably related to George Clifford, whose bank in Amsterdam handled many secret funds for Franco-Swedish-Jacobite affairs. According to Baigent and Leigh, the "Knight of the Red Feather" was Alexander Montgomery, Tenth Earl of Eglinton, who attended Ramsay at his death in 1743.[147] Curiously, in 1846 the implements of this initiation were allegedly in England, in the keeping of "one H. Whyte" and "Mr. Grills," the latter a descendant of the famous Swedish banking family who subsidized Swedenborg and the Swedish-Jacobite effort a century earlier.[148] Hund was led to believe that the Pretender was a secret Chief of the Order of the

Temple and the Young Pretender was the Grand Master. After Hund returned t Germany, he developed the Rite of Strict Observance, in which *Ecossais* Mason swore obedience to the "Unknown Superiors."

In March 1744 Swedenborg was in The Hague, awaiting orders to move o to London, as his friends Henning Gyllenborg and Carl Scheffer utilize Masonic networks on the Continent to organize Swedish support for th impending Jacobite invasion of England.[149] In the oddly veiled language of hi *Journal of Dreams,* Swedenborg recorded his preoccupation with the bloodie spirit of the dead warrior king, Charles XII, and his fear that he was unworth or incapable of serving in this dangerous military mission. On 24 March h described a troubled dream:

> I stood behind a machine, that was set in motion by a wheel; the spokes entangled me more and more and caried me up so that it was impossible to escape; wakened. Signifies...that I ought to be kept more strictly...[150]

His repeated references to the need for silence and secrecy grew out of his fea of the dragnet then implemented in the ports of France and Holland, as the Britis were determined to locate agents of the Jacobite invasion. After violent storm drove successive French fleets back into port in March, the British governmer was greatly relieved for they believed that Swedish and Russian troops wer prepared to join the French invaders.[151]

Provocatively, the Russian troops were then stationed in Sweden, und General James Keith (an exiled Scot and veteran of the Swedish-Jacobite plot 1717), who initiated many of Swedenborg's friends into a specially establishe *Ecossais* lodge in Stockholm.[152] Russian Masons called Keith – their Gra Master – an "image of the dawn," who regenerated Russian political ar spiritual life:

> After him [Peter the Great], Keith, full of light, came to the Russians; and exalted by zeal, lit up the sacred fire. He erected the temple of wisdom, corrected our thoughts and hearts, and confirmed us in brotherhood.[153]

As Billington observes, Keith had "all of the flamboyant qualities of a mediev knight in search of a cause."[154] It was perhaps at at an *Ecossais* lodge meeti that Swedenborg met with "a large number of handsome young people...in group," and then gave Henning Gyllenborg a fraternal kiss, before both set o on their dangerous missions.[155]

On 6 April 1744 at The Hague, Swedenborg recorded his confus dream-memory of his own initiation into the Jacobite high degrees:

> ...it seemed to me that the whole night I was first brought into association with others, through the sinfulness that existed. Afterwards, that I was bandaged and wrapped in wonderful and indescribable courses of circles; showing that during the whole night I was inaugurated in a wonderful manner. And then it was said, "Can any Jacobite be more than honest?" So at last I was received with an embrace. Afterwards it was said that he ought by no means to be called so, or in the way just named; but in some way which I have no recollection of, if it were not Jacobite. This I can by no means explain; it was a mystical series.[156]

The Jacobites used "honest" as code word for loyalty, while the questioning of one's sinfulness, blindfolding, wrapping in death shroud, moving through magical circles, progressing through the mystical series were all part of *Ecossais* Masonic rituals.[157] In accordance with the practice in the high degrees, Swedenborg was given a new name, "Nicolaiter."[158] Like Hund, Swedenborg was unclear about the identity of his "inaugurators," who shrouded their role in darkness while the candidate was blindfolded for much of the ceremony. That Swedenborg also believed the Stuarts were the secret masters is suggested by his reverent dream memory of the king and his two sons some weeks later.[159]

On 5 April Swedenborg recorded that "a courier was now come," but the rest of the entry is heavily inked out. The courier may have been sent by Scheffer, for plans were undertaken to provide Swedish cannon and artillery to the Jacobite forces.[160] Baur in Paris and the Grills in Holland would handle the secret financial transactions. On 18 April Swedenborg obliquely referred to a secret military operation:

> It seemed to me that we worked long to bring in a chest, in which were contained precious things which had long lain there; just as it was a long work with Troy; at last, one went in underneath and eased it onwards; it was thus gotten as conquered; and we sawed and sawed...[161]

Van Dusen observes that Swedenborg's reference to Troy is curious:

> ...the Trojan horse...contained soldiers who opened the enemy gates and enabled the town to be conquered. It is the same here. The chest contains something precious that will enable the "town" to be conquered.[162]

When Swedenborg sailed for London in May, he entered a political minefield as the city was gripped with fear of an impending invasion by "iron-faced" Swedes, Russians, and Jacobites. In the troubled political and military references strewn through his dream diary, the strain of his undercover work is made clear. After the disaster at Culloden, Swedenborg's friends

organized a rescue effort for the Young Pretender, and they welcomed m Scottish refugees to Sweden.[163] Although Baron von Hund eventually elimin Jacobite references from his German rite of Strict Observance, the Swe Freemasons remained loyal to the Jacobite and Templar traditions – well into twentieth century. Swedenborg's role in the shadowy underworld of se diplomacy earned him a lifelong subsidy from Louis XV, who personally p for the anonymous publication of Swedenborg's theosophical treatise London and Amsterdam over the next decades.[164]

Complicating these emerging Jacobite traditions of "Unknown Superi was the suspicion that developed in the 1770's that the Swedish Rite of Mas – now expanding into Germany and Russia – was based on a still more secre Jewish tradition. Much of this suspicion centered on Swedenborg's usage of Kabbalistic "arcana" and his strange descriptions of magical Jews in theosophical works he published from 1749 until his death in 1772.[165] Becaus anti-Semitic pressures in Sweden that frustrated the efforts of Swedenbo family and friends to develop scholarly, financial, and trade relations with Je Swedenborg carefully de-Judaized his essentially Kabbalistic theosoph Despite a parallel de-Judaizing of Swedish Masonry, initiates of the Swe Rite in Europe believed that the Swedish *Illuminés* concealed their hig Kabbalistic and Jewish secrets from foreign members.[167] Thus, in the dec after Swedenborg's death, competition among *Illuminés* became intense, as t sought the identity of Swedenborg's instructors.

It was a complicated path to retrace, as the various Grand Masters lear for Swedenborg had access since his youth to rare teachings of Jewish Kabbali His beloved brother-in-law and intellectual mentor, Eric Benzelius, wa brilliant Hebraist, editor of Philo Judaeus, and friend of Francis Mercurius Helmont, co-author of the *Kabbala Denudata*.[168] Moreover, Benzelius wor for many years with a converted Jew, Rabbi Johan Kemper, on Zoh manuscripts and Kabbalistic interpretations of Scripture.[169] When Swedenb studied Hebrew at Uppsala University, Kemper was almost certainly his teache Despite his conversion, Kemper was a secret adherent of Sabbatai Zevi, an infused subtle Sabbatian themes into his interpretations. Benzelius's son-in-l Anders Norrelius, shared these Kabbalistic interests, and he spent six years ir Jewish community of Amsterdam, where he learned much about the turbu schisms that developed between Sabbatian and Orthodox Jews (or Zoha versus Talmudists, as Christians characterized them). When Swedenborg Norrelius were both in Amsterdam in 1714, they undoubtedly discussed recent impact of the visit of Nehemiah Hiyya Hayon, a radical Sabba Kabbalist, to Amsterdam.[171] In 1720 Norrelius edited Kemper's manuscripts published a learned treatise on the Christian Kabbalism of Knorr von Rosenro

Kabbala Denudata and the Sabbatian Kabbalism of Kemper and Nehemia Hayon.[172] Swedenborg was stimulated by these glimpses into the hidden world of "heretical" Jewish mysticism, and he visited the ghettoes and synagogues of Hamburg, Prague, Rome, and Amsterdam, in his search for further illumination.

Swedenborg's eventual contact with real Jewish "adepts" came through the medium of another secret society, the Moravian brotherhood (or *Herrnhüttern*), which had its own tradition of "hidden superiors." In 1736, when Swedenborg travelled to Europe on his secret political mission, he was also accompanied by Arvid Gradin, a Swedish disciple of the Moravians.[173] Swedenborg's effort to join the elite inner circle of the Moravians was not in conflict with his simultaneous Jacobite initiation, for the European Moravians were a quasi-Masonic fraternity that was generally sympathetic to the Jacobite cause.[174] In Holland and England, the Moravian chief Count Zinzendorf initiated a *Judenmission,* in which his missionaries lived in the Jewish communities and worked for religious union through the *via media* of Kabbalism.[175] Swedenborg may have met the chief agent of the *Judenmission,* Martin Dober, who sought out Swedish supporters for the effort.[176] As early as 1741, Swedish and German critics published accusations that the Moravians and Freemasons were working together to spread their mystical Judaeo-Christian networks.[177]

When Swedenborg left Holland on his dangerous mission in May 1744, he was accompanied by a German Moravian and lived with members of the fraternity in London. Determined to maintain his *incognito,* he may have found the group an effective cover for his espionage work. But he was also sincerely interested in their theosophy and he determined to penetrate deeper into their *inner sanctum.* In the London society, Zinzendorf had introduced secretive rituals for the elite adepts that prefigured much of the structure and symbolism of Illuminist Freemasonry. Henry Rimius, a German visitor to the London Moravians, published an *exposé* that would have peculiar echoes in the next century.[178] He described the Moravians as a hierarchical secret society, made up of men of all nationalities and religions, who obey hidden superiors. "Their leaders are gradually sapping the foundations of civil government of any country they settle, and establishing an empire within an empire." Many of the secrets are known to adepts alone, "who give blind obedience to the will of Superiors." Zinzendorf's discourses are presented in a secret cipher language that conceals the real message from the lower ranks of the brotherhood.

Hinting further at Zinzendorf's collusion with the Freemasons, Rimius noted that the Count praises the Architect of the World and calls for the laying of the Grand-God's foundations. Jesus is described as a journeyman artisan who wears a special apron. The conservative British Moravian, James Hutton, later complained about experiments in egalitarianism and abolition of class distinctions

during the "Great Sifting" period instigated by Zinzendorf in the 1750's.[179] During the Jacobite panic of spring 1744, London mobs accused the Moravians of sympathy for the Jacobites, and some charged them with hiding "a great quantity of arms and gunpowder."[180] By 1745, so many Londoners believed that the Moravians were supporting the invasion that Hutton and several British-born brethren presented a fulsome declaration of loyalty to King George II. It is possible that Hutton's alarm was increased by an earlier indiscretion from Swedenborg, who recorded his worry that he had boasted about his work before "J.H." (whom Bergquist identifies as Hutton).[181] Interestingly, the registers of the London society suggest that William Blake's parents may have been Moravians at this time.[182]

In the secretive interior section – called the German Pilgrim Section or *Der Pilger* – Zinzendorf revealed an esoteric doctrine of sexual antinomianism that bore striking resemblance to that of radical Sabbatianism. Rimius described these rituals as "gnostic obscenities," and many of the bizarre sexual passages in Swedenborg's diaries accurately reflect the behavior of the Pilgrim Section.[183] Zinzendorf's explorations in the more extreme forms of Kabbalism were part of his *Judenmission,* which sought a transvaluation of existing religious and behavioral norms. Throughout Swedenborg's association with the Moravians in London, Zinzendorf was actively seeking contact with Sabbatian Jews, in the East End of London as well as Eastern Europe. In 1757-1758 the Count was stirred by reports from Poland about the charismatic Sabbatian leader Jacob Frank. Zinzendorf himself journeyed to Switzerland in the hope of meeting Jewish emissaries of the Frankist movement, and he sent a converted Jew – David Kirchof – to seek direct contact with Frank in Poland.[184]

Zinzendorf believed that the apocalyptic Kabbalism of the Jewish sect brought it close to Christian beliefs, and a union between the Moravians and Frankists would usher in the millenium. When news reached London of the conversion of thousands of Frankists to the Roman Catholic Church, an indignant Englishman wrote to the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1759) to lament that the Papists rather than the Protestants won the Frankist prize.[185] Interestingly, the letter writer was probably Edward Goldney, who was then engaged in a bizarre effort to convert the Jews in England by inviting them to sumptuous dinners. With Goldney's effort we get our first glimpse of the young Richard Cosway in the context of philo-Semitism, for he painted the portrait of Goldney used as the frontispiece to the latter's *Friendly Epistle to the Deists and Jews* (London, 1759).[186] Through his own interest in Kabbalism and Freemasonry, Cosway may have met Swedenborg in the 1760's, for he was a close friend of Dr. Husband Messiter, a Swedish-born Freemason who became Swedenborg's personal physician.[187]

Meanwhile, the main Sabbatian representative in England was Dr. Falk, whose mysterious personality, occult expertise, and political influence would eventually make him a leading candidate among late eighteenth-century Masons for *the* "Unknown Superior." Falk grew up in Podolia, Poland, an area that bordered the Ottoman Empire and was a stronghold of Sabbatianism.[188] He was influenced by the most radical branch of Sabbatianism, taught by Baruchia Russo, which called for a complete reversal of values, symbolized by the change of the thirty-six prohibitions of the Torah into positive commands (including all the prohibited sexual unions and incest). If Falk indulged in these licentious practices, he managed to be discreet, for he soon gained a reputation as a *Baal-Shem,* a holy master of the Kabbalistic names of God. Many Christians sought his occult assistance, leading the Archbishop of Cologne to condemn him to death as a sorcerer. Around 1740 he fled to Amsterdam, where his skill as a Kabbalist and predictor of lottery winners attracted admirers among Jewish and Christian bankers and merchants.

Swedenborg may have heard of Falk's reputation from Masonic friends such as Tessin, who acquired a rare book that portrayed Falk as a Rosicrucian adept and Prince of the Jews.[189] Tessin himself was dabbling in Rosicrucianism at the time. In Rantzau's *Mémoires* (1741), the Danish count described Falk's alchemical and magical exploits at this father's estate in Brunswick. Rantzau called him "le fameuse Cabalistique et Grand Prêtre des Juifs."[190] Falk conjured visions of angels before the astounded onlookers and conversed with the celestial spirits in Hebrew. He discovered buried treasures, created occult talismans, and drew magical circles for arcane rites. But his millenarial political predictions of a world war leading to universal peace frightened Rantzau, who vowed to renounce his Kabbalistic studies. Among the witnesses of Falk's performances were Baron Donop and his son, an officer of the King of Sweden. Rantzau was also friendly with the Swedish Count Löwenhaupt, a colleague of Tessin, and he hoped to visit him in Sweden.

Rantzau revealed that Falk was ordered out of his father's house and eventually made his way to London, where he was welcomed by the Portuguese Jews "comme leur Prince et Souverain Pontife." An English friend informed Rantzau that the British government arrested Falk but then released him on condition that he not practice Kabbala. Falk remained fearful of arrest throughout his life and thus maintained intense secrecy, as he developed a Sabbatian brotherhood in London. He settled on Prescott Street in the East End and eventually acquired an imposing mansion in nearby Wellclose Square, where he kept a private synagogue and erected a tabernacle in the public garden.[191] Falk also maintained an alchemical lab on London Bridge, with an outer business office and an interior chamber for initiates.

In 1744, when Swedenborg travelled to London on Jacobite-Morav business, he may have been deliberately seeking contact with Dr. Falk. At t time, his political friends in Stockholm had undertaken a bizarre project to attr wealthy Jews to Sweden.[192] At The Hague, Swedenborg's old friend Ambassa Preis (who shared his Jacobite and Moravian sympathies) contacted Tob Boas, a Jewish banker who was a patron of Falk, and asked him to help with Swedish immigration project.[193] Thus, Swedenborg probably had diplomati well as occult purposes in his overtures to Jews in London. As soon as he sett in with the Moravians, Swedenborg had at least two un-named Jew companions.[194] As he progressed in some kind of initiatory process, he mo to the Wellclose Square area, where he achieved the ecstatic trance t transformed him from a scientist-diplomat with a bent for the supernatural i a full-fledged visionary. For nearly thirty years, whenever Swedenborg retur to London, he was a close neighbor of Dr. Falk. By happy coincidence, Swedish Church that he attended was in Prince's Square next to Wellcl Square. The Swedish ministers usually lodged in Wellclose Square, Swedenborg's friend Eric Bergstrom ran a tavern in the square. Provocativ Bergstrom's tavern also hosted a French-affiliated Masonic lodge wh welcomed Jews.[195]

While studying Hebrew and practising Kabbalistic meditation, Swedenb became obsessed with Messianic fantasies. Johan Brockmer, a Morav acquaintance, reported that Swedenborg told him that he was about a great solemn work:

> ...he was the Messiah, that he had come to be crucified for the Jews; and that as he had a great impediment in his speech, Mr. B. [Brockmer] was chosen to be his mouthpiece, to go with him to the Synagogue and there to preach his work..."An Angel will appear at your bedside in the morning; then you will believe."[196]

Swedenborg also wrote a small treatise, "Concerning the Messiah Ab to Come," which revealed his belief that he was "Emmanuel," the servant of Messiah who will convert the Jews and lead them to Palestine, "where mo beings are to be consociated with heavenly."[197] Swedenborg may have reac this messianic state while meditating on the mystical designs that were give him on his arrival in England.[198] But it was in Falk's neighborhood tha received "from Heaven" a mysterious parchment with Hebrew inscriptions became the key experience of his theosophical development.[199] It seems prob that "Emanuel, a servant of the King of France," whom Falk mentioned in commonplace book was Emanuel Swedenborg.[200]

Swedenborg may also have been influenced by Ramsay's Masonic vision of "the GREAT EMANUEL," he who is called "the DESIRE OF NATIONS":

> ...there is a mystery which is nowhere unfolded but in our religion [*Ecossais* Masonry]...The GREAT EMANUEL will, many ages before his [the Messiah's] triumphant appearance in the clouds, live upon earth in a state of humiliation. He will expiate sin, by the sacrifice of himself, before he restores the universe to its primitive splendour...Let us not rashly pry into those impenetrable secrets; it is sufficient to know that THE DESIRE OF NATIONS will appear upon earth to bear our griefs...[201]

Ramsay's illuminist novel, *The Travels of Cyrus* (1730) was almost a gospel for Swedenborg's colleagues Tessin and Dalin, and another Masonic friend Anders Wilde translated it into Swedish. Unfortunately, Ramsay did not live to see the sensational campaign of his young Cyrus, Charles Edward Stuart, as he sailed to Scotland in July 1745 to restore the *Ecossais* temple of wisdom.

Provocatively, as the Young Pretender – with secret Swedish assistance – landed in Scotland in early August, Swedenborg identified his illuminated Christians and regenerated Jews with the Biblical Jacobites. Drawing out references to Jacobites from the Book of Tobit, he wrote that "they shall build a splendid Temple, not like the former, but one that shall endure. And afterwards from the places of exile, they shall build up Jerusalem gloriously."[202] According to Jacobite Masonic tradition, a "Royal Order of Scotland," with a Rosicrucian grade derived from Ramsay, existed in London in 1743-1748.[203] London itself was identified with Jerusalem, which the exiles would recapture.[204] The same tradition claims that Prince Charles Edward Stuart presided over a Chapter of the Order of the Temple at Holyrood Castle in Edinburgh, on 24 September 1745, which celebrated his return from exile.[205]

Though British historians of the Grand Lodge scoff at the claim, the rival Swedish system believed it throughout the eighteenth century. When King Gustav III received the Grand Mastership from the Young Pretender in 1783, he was accompanied by Baron Gustav Armfelt, whose father had served under Prince Charles in the rising of 1745.[206] Even in London, the secretive *Ecossais* "Lodge of Union" claimed the Stuart prince as Grand Master until 1774, when political necessity forced the Master, Pierre Lambert de Lintot, to replace him with the Duke of Cumberland, the disaffected brother of George III.[207] That Lintot drew on Swedenborgian teachings and was later visited by Falk and his protégé Cagliostro forms one of the most complicated chapters in the underground history of *Ecossais* Masonry in London.[208]

In late summer 1745, when the rebellion in Scotland erupted, the British government began rounding up suspected Jacobite supporters in London.

Swedenborg recorded his fears of soldiers and threats to his life and then abru
left for Sweden on 19 August 1745. Another suspected Jacobite, the myster
Comte de Saint-Germain (Rosicrucian adept and secret agent for the Fr
government) was not so lucky, for he was arrested as a spy in Decembe
Despite the defeat of the Stuarts in 1746, Swedenborg's friends in Swe
continued to support recurrent attempts at new Jacobite expedition
Swedenborg's return visits to London would have related political purpose
well as theosophical goals. In 1749 when he anonymously published volume
of *Arcana Coelestia* in London (at Louis XV's expense), Swedenborg may h
learned that an old colleague from the Gyllenborg-Görtz plot was soliciting
from Dr. Falk. Theodore von Neuhof – secret agent, alchemist, Kabbalist,
Freemason – probably knew Swedenborg from his early days in the Swe
army and his career as as a courier for the Swedish planners of the 1716 projec
Neuhof's path also crossed Swedenborg's in Paris and Italy.

After a colorful episode as the short-lived King of Corsica in 1736, Neu
flirted erratically with the Jacobites and Hanoverians, before recommit
himself to the former in 1744. Rantzau had included a eulogy to "King" Theo
along with his account of Falk, and in Sweden Theodore was considered a h
among the young "Hats." Now in London, Theodore collaborated with Fal
various treasure-finding and Kabbalistic schemes, while continuing to init
friends into his neo-Masonic "Order of Deliverance." Theodore was accompa
to Falk's inner chamber, where the master kept his box of mystical manuscri
by a Dr. Smith, who repeatedly visited the *Baal Shem*.[212] The physician
almost certainly the same Dr. Smith who treated Swedenborg for an hallucina
fever during his messianic phase, and who then shared lodgings with hi
According to the Moravians, Smith had a "strange turn of mind."[214]

William Smith, M.D., drew on Jewish traditions and Kabbalistic writi
to develop his medical treatment of fevers, which he believed originated from
disruption of equilibrium between the heavenly and bodily aether.[215] Moreo
Smith was probably referring to Swedenborg when he wrote:

> We often see a man of the brightest parts, and most enlarged understanding, who hath penetrated into the secret recesses of nature, despoiled of his wisdom, and noble endowments, by the tyranny of a violent fever; a fit of lunacy...[216]

Smith continued that "if religion takes his imagination, he fancies him
a Prophet, the Holy ghost, etc." Smith was probably interested in Fa
Kabbalistic healing techniques, which the adept used to "cure" epilepsy
mental illness (spirit-possession). The diary of Hirsch Kalisch, Falk's factot
suggests that Swedenborg may have persisted in his messianic preaching at

Jewish synagogue, for he was probably the "Man from the North" who caused much controversy among the Jews in the Wellclose Square area.[217]

During this London visit (his third), Swedenborg also began a secretive association with some actors and theater workers who knew Theodore and were employed by David Garrick (who often performed in the Wellclose Square neighborhood). Jean Monnet, who came from Paris to work for Garrick in 1748-1749, lived with Theodore and later wrote a colorful, fictionalized account of the Jewish Rosicrucian who taught them Kabbala (almost certainly Falk).[218] Garrick, who gave a benefit performance of *King Lear* for Theodore, was himself a Freemason and interested in Kabbalistic studies.[219] Monnet later recommended to Garrick the French artist Phillipe Jacques de Loutherbourg, who became Garrick's scene designer. In 1771 Loutherbourg sought out Swedenborg and painted his portrait; it is also possible that Loutherbourg painted the great portrait of Dr. Falk (presently attributed to J.S. Copley).[220] With bold and luminous gaze, the *Baal Shem* faces the world with Masonic compass in hand, drawing Kabbalistic hieroglyphs. Loutherbourg later painted a series of symbolic illustrations of Cagliostro's Masonic rites, derived from the teachings of Falk and Swedenborg.[221]

Monnet also sent to Garrick a French composer and violinist – Francis H. Barthelemon – who became a Swedenborgian Freemason and an early member of Blake's Swedenborg Society.[222] A Russian actor, Dimitrevsky Narykov, moved in these same circles, and he later claimed to have met both Garrick and Swedenborg in London.[223] On his return to Russia, Narykov played a leading role in the foundation of a lodge of Swedenborgian Masonry that preserved the tradition of Dr. Falk as an "Unknown Superior." Richard Cosway would later develop contacts with visiting Russians and Poles who were members of this Swedish rite, as he immersed himself in Swedenborgian, Kabbalistic, and Hebrew studies.[224]

While Swedenborg's reputation as an *Illuminé* spread in Europe through his voluminous publications and Masonic contacts, Falk's fame spread in the same circles. The Marquis de Thomé, who allegedly met Swedenborg in Paris in 1769, cooperated with J.P. Moët in the first French translations of Swedenborg's works.[225] Both men were high-ranking Freemasons, and Thomé founded a Swedenborgian lodge in Paris in 1773, shortly after the seer's death.[226] Thomé was well aware of the similarities between the teachings of Swedenborg and Falk, for he studied Falk's system of Kabbala in the 1770's. In company with the Marquise de la Croix, an eccentric and visionary "adept," Thomé met with Rabbi Azulai to discuss Falk's instruction.[227] The Marquise told the horrified rabbi (who was a learned Kabbalist but anti-Sabbatian) that Falk showed her visions of angels and spirits. Azulai lamented that "so many Christians have been won

over by the so-called *Baal-Shem*, who out of pride and presumption has revea
the practical Cabala and the adjurations to so many gentlemen and ladies ou
vanity." In 1783 Thomé visited London, where he played a seminal role in
organization of the Swedenborgian Theosophical Society that Cosway joine
1784 and William Blake some years later.[228]

Thomé was not the only French Mason who sought Falk's instruction,
the Duke of Chartres – Grand Master of the Grand Orient in Paris – visited
Kabbalist in Wellclose Square circa 1777.[229] Falk consecrated a talismanic r
of lapis lazuli for Chartres, which would assure his ascension to the Fre
throne. When Chartres became successively the Duke of Orleans and Phill
Egalité, the reactionary Marquise de la Croix determined to thwart his ambitio
She boasted of destroying Falk's talisman by her magical prayers, which cau
the ring to vanish from Orleans' breast in the middle of the National Assembly
Cosway, who undoubtedly knew Thomé and who was intimate with Orlea
was probably familiar with the story of the revolutionary talisman.[231] Blak
portrayal of Orleans as a mesmerizing Grand Master and revolutionary hero
The French Revolution) suggests his familiarity with Orleans' role in illumini
Freemasonry.[232]

During the 1770's in Germany, both Swedenborg and Falk joined
rumored ranks of the "Unknown Superiors" in the proliferating Strict Observa
lodges. In 1771 the Grand Master, Landgrave Ludwig of Hesse-Darmsta
corresponded with Swedenborg on occult subjects.[233] Seven years later,
Landgrave sent Simon von Geldern, his "Court Cabalist," on a Masonic missi
to seek Falk's secrets in Wellclose Square.[234] Geldern's manuscript diary of
Kabbalistic adventures in the Masonic underground fascinated his great-neph
the poet Heinrich Heine, who felt "possessed" by the spirit of his adventur
ancestor. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, the courageous advocate of tolerance
the Jews, was initiated into the Swedish Rite (Zinnendorf branch) in 1771. At
height of speculation in Germany about Falk's role in Masonry, Lessi
published in 1778 his Masonic dialogues, provocatively titled *Ernst und Falk*
Lessing seemed to draw on Falk's reputation in the Swedish Rite as an inspi
Kabbalist and political manipulator. Lessing was ordered to stop publicat
after the first three dialogues appeared, because of the concern of the Duke
Brunswick, current Grand Master of the Strict Observance. The Duke v
probably informed about Falk – and his insistence on secrecy – by Cagliost
who met the Duke in the "Indissoluble Lodge" at The Hague in 1777.[236] Falk v
listed as a member of this lodge, and Cagliostro – fresh from London – used
Dutch lodge as the launching pad for Falk's new system of Egyptian Masonry
Serving as the emissary of the "Great Cophta," whose identification as Falk v
kept secret except from elite adepts, Cagliostro planned to visit Swedenborg

; in Germany, Poland, and Russia, in order to win them over to the new
)-Christian form of Freemasonry.
With the emergence of Cagliostro, we come upon the more discernible
)f the Golden Dawn legends that so intrigued Yeats in the 1890's. The lowly
painter Joseph Balsamo arrived in London in 1771, when he took lodgings
wedenborg and Falk.[238] It is possible that Balsamo met Swedenborg, who
cently left Sweden after a theological trial had branded him a heretic and
:ned his disciples with banishment. After Balsamo transformed himself
Count" Cagliostro, he praised Swedenborg in personal terms as a fine man
/as unfairly persecuted by the Swedes.[239] Balsamo may also have met
:rbourg, who became an early disciple of Cagliostro's Egyptian Rite.
importantly, Balsamo may have met Dr. Falk in 1771, the year which
d the beginning of his mysterious career as a Masonic *guru*. After five
:untraceable years in Europe, when he learned Kabbalistic and alchemical
Balsamo returned to London in 1776 as the flamboyant Cagliostro – an
:r of Swedenborg and a protégé of Falk.
Cagliostro worked with Falk and William Bousie, a wealthy Anglo-French
ant, to develop a new system of "Egyptian" Masonry that would merge
Kabbalism and Swedenborg's theosophy into a new Judaeo-Christian
Bousie later assisted Thomé in the organization of the Swedenborgian
)phical Society in London in 1783.[241] Falk and Cagliostro visited London
, including two associated with Lintot's "Rite of Seven Degrees," and, in
)rt to raise funds, Cagliostro exerted his new Kabbalistic skills in lottery
tions.[242] After a brush with the law, Cagliostro set out for The Hague,
Falk had many admirers.[243] As the emissary of the Great Cophta, he made
ation among the Swedenborgian Masons in northern Germany. But his
y object was Russia, where the Swedish Rite had great influence. He was
o come up against a formidable adversary, however, in the Empress
ine the Great.
Worried by the successful Swedish penetration of Russian Masonry, in
initiates pledged obedience to Swedish rather than Russian superiors, and
ted by the occultism which set back her plans for *aufklärung*, Catherine
dertaken a thorough reading of Masonic literature and sent her spies into
lges. On 9 July 1781, the Empress wrote to Baron Grimm:

> M. Cagliostro...est arrivé dans un moment très favorable pour lui, dans un moment ou plusieurs loges de francs-maçons, engouées des principes de Swedenborg, voulaient à toute force voir des esprits; ils ont donc couru a Cagliostro, qui se disait en possession de tous les secrets du docteur Falk, ami intime du duc de Richelieu et qui lui fai faire au milieu de Vienne autrefois un sacrifice au bouc noir...[244]

From her reference to Falk's affair with Richelieu (erroneous, according to Boas), Catherine had obviously read Rantzau's *Mémoires*. But she had probably learned more about Falk and Swedenborg from the activities of Dimitrevsky Narykov, who now played a leading role in the Swedish-affiliated lodges.[245] In 1777 a group of visiting Swedish Masons (including King Gustav III and Swedenborg's friend Count Scheffer) revealed to the Russian lodges that they had precious documents which contained the Masonic secrets embedded in the "hieroglyphic language of the old Jewish wisdom books."[246] However, the Swedes delayed in turning over their documents and, by 1781, the Russians concluded that they did not really possess the key to the hieroglyphs. The Russians believed the key was still in London; thus, Cagliostro, as the emissary of Dr. Falk, was welcomed as a conquering hero. Cagliostro's host, I.P. Elagin, later noted in his diary, "Hieroglyphs sent from London."[247] A Russian Mason would later boast: "Be assured Sweden herself cannot give anything except the hieroglyphics; she herself knows that this source exists somewhere, is looking for it, but has not found it."[248]

This subversive mumbo-jumbo was too much for Catherine, who prided herself on Voltairean rationalism. She wrote that her hands itched to flog Cagliostro; instead, she published *Le Secret de la Société Anti-Absurd* (1780), a blistering satire of Masonic rites and symbols. Then, as Cagliostro continued to gain disciples, she drove him out of Russia. Launching a crackdown on "gullible Swedenborgians," Martinists, and Masons – whom she lumped together – Catherine planned to deliver "un coup de massive pour les enthousiastes."[249] This was issued in the form of three plays which ridiculed Illuminism and were required viewing for her captive audience at court. In the first, *The Deceiver* (1786), she satirized Cagliostro and Falk under the *portmanteau* name of "Kalifalkerston."[250] The plays were translated into several languages and circulated widely abroad. Interestingly, in London, the Swedenborgians (who now included friends of Blake and probably Blake himself) viewed Catherine's theatrical satire on Falk and Cagliostro as an attack on themselves.[251]

In the meantime, Cagliostro travelled to Poland, where the Freemasons subsequently praised Dr. Falk and Jacob Frank as true Kabbalists; to Frankfurt, where he claimed to meet the leaders of the politically radical *Illuminati;* and to Vienna, where he allegedly met the Comte de Saint-Germain (former "Jacobite" spy and now Rosicrucian mentor to Prince Carl of Hesse-Cassel).[252] Though research on the question has only begun, it is possible that Saint-Germain and Cagliostro were both involved in the organization of the "Order of Asiatic Brethren," which was developed out of the German "Gold-und-Rosenkreutzer" by a small group of Sabbatian Jews and Kabbalistic Christians. The Order of Asiatics, which had important ramifications into the nineteenth century, counted

Falk as one of its masters, and it had links with Swedenborgians in London.[253] ;liostro's statements after he left Vienna suggest his involvement in a similar batian-Masonic plan.

Arriving in Strasbourg, Cagliostro moved into the house of Jean Benoit erer, the eminent historian, who had known Swedenborg personally in :den and who was considered an expert on Scandinavian Masonry.[254] erer's friend, Frederick Rudolph Saltzmann, another admirer of Swedenborg's :ks, left a valuable record of his conversations with Cagliostro in /ember-December 1780:

> Il dit beaucoup de bien de Swedenborg et le plaint d'avoir été persecuté. En vain les Suédois veulent a present quasi resusciter sa cendre, ils ne decouvriront rien. Le plus grand homme en Europe, c'est le célèbre Falke à Londres. C'est dans cette capitale qu'il y a 5 ou 6 maçons qui ont des connaissances, mais le clef leur manque. Il me dit encore qu'en operant il faut des cercles, des mots – quatre cercles – et des hieroglyphes. Il m'a paru pencher vers le judaïsme; ce n'est cependant qu'une hypothèse que je ne donne pas pour vraie.[255]

altzmann also noted that Cagliostro planned to journey to Paris in order to iitiate the Duke of Chartres into the Egyptian Rite. As noted earlier, Chartres ad already studied Kabbala under Falk.

While Cagliostro planned a takeover of French Freemasonry, the Grand lasters of the Strict Observance worried about the proliferating rites and :hisms. Thus, in 1782 the Duke of Brunswick and Prince Carl of Hesse-Cassel rganized a Masonic convention at Wilhelmsbad in order to investigate the ompeting systems and to bring order and coherence into the Strict Observance.[256] igh-degree Masons from many countries were invited, including a delegation om London that included several Swedenborgians and a former Jacobite.[257] hough the dominant issue was the question of Stuart and Templar traditions, the ıost intriguing question for many delegates concerned the true identity and role ı Masonry of Dr. Falk. Savalette de Langes, head of the *Philaléthes* lodge of :search in Paris, prepared a secret briefing notebook for the use of his :presentative – a book which revealed the intense fascination that Falk xercized over his contemporaries:

> Dr. Falc, in England. This Dr. Falc is known to many Germans. From every point of view he is a most extraordinary man. Some believe him to be the Chief of All the Jews, and attribute all that is marvelous and strange in his conduct and in his life to schemes which are entirely political...He is practically inaccessible. In all the higher Sects of Adepts in the Occult Sciences he passes as a man of higher attainments...Try to get fresh information about him at Frankfort.[258]

Savalette went on to reveal that Baron von Gleichen, the Danish diplomat, knows Falk; that Waldenfels, the German Rosicrucian, knows Falk; and that Prince Louis of Darmstadt claims that in his youth he worked with a Jew who was a pupil of Falk.[259]

The delegates to Wilhelmsbad had hoped to get answers from London, but the chief English representative – General Charles Rainsford – was unable to attend because of military duties in Algeria. Rainsford, an early disciple of Swedenborg, had followed Falk's career for years, and he knew personally Falk's Jewish patrons in Holland (the Boas family). Rainsford was currently involved in some kind of Masonic scheme with Falk, but in October 1782 he wrote to the *Philaléthes*:

> As to the Kabbalah, all is upset by the unexpected death of Dr. Falk...Up to now I have found nothing certain relating to that Rabbi, whether he is genuine or a knave. What does your friend in Franconia say about it, who was so desperately taken with him? Believe me, I have found news about that Jew among the Jews of Algiers, and they have told me some extraordinary stories about him, even so far as to attribute their success against the Spaniards to him--*voilá*! I don't know his real origin!...I have found some rather curious MSS. at Algiers, in Hebrew, relating to the Society of Rosicrucians, which exists at present under another name with the same forms. I hope, moreover, to be admitted to their true knowledge.[260]

When Rainsford returned to London, he worked with the Swedenborgian Freemasons to organize the "Universal Society," which was a secret Masonic group dedicated to the study and propagation of Swedenborgianism.[261] Until at least the end of the century, this group carried on a clandestine but complementary activity with the public Swedenborg Society that Blake joined. It was in concert with Rainsford and his friends that Cosway kept a room for the performance of magical ceremonies – as mentioned by Yeats when he hinted at Blake's access to Rosicrucian students.[262]

The complex story of the influence of Falk and Cagliostro on Blake's Swedenborgian society requires a lengthy exposition, but the nineteenth-century ramifications of Falk's influence on the Golden Dawn can be briefly sketched here. At the Wilhelmsbad Convention, the Strict Observance disintegrated into even more competing systems. The Duke of Brunswick and Prince Carl of Hesse-Cassel became Grand Masters in the new "Order of Asiatic Brethren," which merged Sabbatian Kabbalism into Christian theosophy drawn from

Swedenborg, Saint-Martin, and Georg Welling.[263] At first, when the society was headquartered in Vienna, the Jewish elements predominated. Prince Carl opened lodges in Copenhagen and Danish-controlled Schleswig. Despite anti-Semitic traditions among the Germans in Schleswig, Prince Carl represented a more tolerant Danish tradition that had long allowed Jews, Rosicrucians, and alchemists access to the Danish court. The Duke of Brunswick oversaw the "Asiatics" at Berlin and Hamburg. In the latter city, the "Asiatics" drew on the Sabbatian teachings of Rabbi Jonathon Eibeschütz, who had earlier maintained a mysterious relation with *Elias Artista* (Johannes Müller), the Rosicrucian patron of Swedenborg in Hamburg.[264]

While these Sabbatian-Danish ties developed, the rival Swedish system under King Gustav III determined to seek further for the Kabbalistic and Rosicrucian keys to their rituals. In 1782 Gustav sent General Toll to Aix-la-Chapelle, where he interviewed a shadowy Baron Reuschenberg about the Rosicrucians in northern Italy. Toll then went on to Paris, where he contacted Cagliostro. After fleeing Russia, Cagliostro had boasted that Gustav III had invited him to Sweden. Now, Cagliostro affirmed to General Toll:

> I know that you search for truth and light, and you will find it. Sweden is particularly graced with masters of the science. Write your King that I will promise to give him that for which he thirsts, and even more.[265]

He warned Toll to reveal this conversation only to Gustav and then hinted emotionally at further secrets. The world will learn his true identity, for "I am not a Count, I am not named Cagliostro; who I am will be revealed someday." Though Toll reported to Gustav that Cagliostro was a charlatan, the illuminist king remained fascinated by the mysterious magus, whom the Swedenborgians at his court considered one of their own. One dramatic result of this "fact-finding" mission was that Gustav believed absolutely that Charles Edward Stuart was "the famous Unknown Superior" of the Knights Templar.[266]

Through the medium of Swedenborgianism and Sabbatian Kabbalism, the rival Masonic systems of Sweden and Denmark reached an accommodation in the 1780's. Prince Carl of Hesse-Cassel corresponded with the Swedenborgian Exegetic Society in Stockholm and with the Theosophical Society in London.[267] However, anti-Semitic pressures from German members in Schleswig and from rationalist Masons in Copenhagen led to a split in the "Asiatic Brethren." A reluctant Prince Carl subsequently headed a lodge called "Carl of the Dawning Light," which became exclusively Christian though still Kabbalistic.[268] An attempt at forming exclusively Jewish "Melchizedek" lodges did not succeed. In this obscure schism lies the root of Wynn Westcott's confusion over Falk's alleged membership in the exclusively Christian Rosicrucian system, for Charles'

Aurore Naissante lodge provided the seeds of the later flourishing of the Golde Dawn.

In the 1780's and 1790's, a spate of pamphlets appeared, criticizing ar defending the "Asiatics" and Rosicrucians. The works were eagerly acquired b Rainsford and the London *Illuminés*.[269] Rainsford seems to have perceived th "Asiatics" as the fruition of the earlier Kabbalistic plans of Falk. In 1793, Johar Caspar Lavater (Blake's idol) visited the remnant of the"Asiatic" lodge Copenhagen, where he achieved the ecstatic visionary experience that seeme to fulfill the earlier promises made by "Gablidone, the spirit of a Cabalist Jew."[270] Lavater had learned of Gablidone's prophecies from Count Thun, a early member of the "Asiatics."[271] Henry Fuseli, the painter and friend of Blak received from Lavater his account of the Rosicrucian adventure in Copenhagen.

From Copenhagen Prince Carl maintained discrete contact with Ephrai Joseph Hirschfeld, a leading Sabbatian member, and the shadowy fragile linl between former "Asiatics" and Rosicrucians in Denmark and Sweden continue into the early 1800's. However, counter-revolutionary measures and anti-Semitis took their toll on the members. Carl Boheman, a Swedish diplomat, had joine the "Asiatics" in Germany and then worked with Prince Carl in Denmark; in 18(he moved to Stockholm where he tried to win over King Gustav Adolph IV. Not only did he attract Count Mäns Stenbock, but he found sympathizers amor the Swedenborgians, who were carrying on a clandestine correspondence wi their fellows in London. Boheman had earlier initiated an Englishman name Stephen, with whom he visited London.[274] In 1803 he was on the verge initiating the Duke of Gloucester, a member of the English royal family, wh was visiting Stockholm. Gloucester, who had hoped to infuse illuminist rit into English Masonry, was a friend of Rainsford, Loutherbourg, and Cosway. The ambitious attempt to gain the English duke to the "Asiatics" was foile however, when Bohemann was arrested and banished from Sweden. Moving Hamburg, he maintained contact with the "Asiatics," and in 1811-1816 h published defenses of his Masonic actions.[276]

In 1806 another Swedenborgian Freemason – J.E. Harmensen – w expelled from Sweden on charges of illuminatist subversion.[277] Finding refu in France, Harmensen claimed to be in contact with the "Unknown Superiors and he was rewarded by the high-ranking Mason Bourée de Corberon with a li of the historical leaders of the Illuminist rite – who included Eckleff fro Sweden and Dr. Falc "at –" (left blank in the manuscript). Harmensen al claimed contact with the spirit of Swedenborg, and he was counseled b Corberon to follow the instructions of "your compatriot Emm. Schwed."

Meanwhile in Germany, the Jewish descendants of the "Asiatics" suffer increasing anti-Semitic persecution. In 1807 they turned to the revolutiona

government in France for help and succeeded in gaining recognition from the Grand Lodge of Paris.[278] They resumed the name of the lodge *Aurore Naissante* or, in German, *Zur augehenden Morgenröthe*. However, the increasingly difficult position in Germany led to efforts to gain support from the Grand Lodge of London. Thus, it is possible that the Johann F. Falk of Golden Dawn legend was a real person, who may have come to London circa 1810 as an emissary of the *Morgenröthe*. The Dr. Falk who died in 1782 had a stepson named Gedalyah but nothing else is presently known of his kinsmen in Germany. From Kalisch's diary, it is clear that Falk maintained contacts with Sabbatians in Hamburg and Altona. It is also possible that some German Kabbalist took on the name of Falk because of its exalted status among occultist Masons.

While the *Morgenröthe* members tried to strengthen their ties with England, Hirschfeld sought to further their cause with Prince Carl of Hesse-Cassel. Hirschfeld sent Franz J. Molitor, a Christian member of the predominantly Jewish lodge, to Prince Carl at Schleswig. The Prince, now head of German Freemasonry, had become less confident about the Sabbatian-Christian synthesis advocated by Hirschfeld, and he sent Molitor back with a new constitution that made the upper degrees exclusively Christian. Hirschfeld, who had resumed initiations of new members, was deeply disappointed at the Prince's failure of nerve. But a worse fate awaited the reviving "Asiatics" and *Morgenröthe,* when they came under bitter attack from a Johann Christian Ehrmann, who published a vitriolic pamphlet, *Das Judenthum in der Maurerey: eine Warnung an alle Deutschen Logen* [Frankfurt, 1816]. Ehrmann accused the *Morgenröthe* of merging Jewish and Christian beliefs in an attempt to penetrate the Masonic movement "so as to convert it into an instrument of world domination."[279]

Ehrmann was horrified that Jews had become Rosicrucians and mingled easily with their Christian Masonic brothers.[280] They swore on the Bible and bowed to the Cross but still remained Jewish. Hinting at Napoleonic revolutionary designs, he linked them with the French Templars and the revenge of Jacques de Molay. Even worse, Hirschfeld sprang from the school of Cagliostro, which claimed an unnamed Patriarch as the "Unknown Superior." They had spread into Schleswig, where Prince Carl of Hesse-Cassel even gave them a constitution. Ehrmann's attack so frightened Prince Carl that he withdrew his authorization and ordered the lodge to disband. But the Jewish brethren found support in London, where the Duke of Sussex, Grand Master of the reunified English system, granted the Frankfurt *Morgenröthe* full Masonic authority.[281]

Sussex, who was first initiated in Berlin in 1793, was an enthusiastic philo-Semite and diligent student of Hebrew. He collected a valuable library of Kabbalistic works, including the rare manuscripts of the radical Sabbatian Abraham Cardozo.[282] Sussex was probably aware of the attempt of the "Asiatics"

to maintain a universalist Kabbalistic religion, for he was the confidante and a in political and Masonic affairs of the Duke of Gloucester, who had hoped to j the "Asiatics" in Stockholm.[283] Sussex was also the patron and friend of Solom Bennett, the talented artist, engraver, and Hebrew *litterateur,* who evidently h some contact with the Kabbalistic circle of Prince Carl in Copenhagen.[28 political liberal but an autocratic Grand Master (serving from 1813 to 1843), Duke of Sussex struggled to maintain a universalist creed in English Freemason which led him to suppress the exclusively Christian rites of the Knights Templ One victim of Sussex's move against the Templars and Rosicrucians was Wal Rodwell Wright, the poet and reviver of Stuart-Templar traditions, who was a a friend of William Blake.[285] This rivalry and polarization witl nineteenth-century Masonry in England, which has not been adequat researched, fed the confused and contradictory accounts which issued fr Yeats's colleagues in the Golden Dawn.

Curiously, one of the few people who described accurately Blak radical, antinomian, and Swedenborgian beliefs (which drew on Sabbatia Rosicrucian traditions) was Henry Crabb Robinson, who maintained close t with illuminist Masons in Germany and who had access to the secret history the "Asiatics."[286] In the 1830's, Robinson became an intimate friend of Molit who discussed his Masonic philosophy of Christian Kabbalism with the visit Englishman. Molitor, who joined the *Morgenröthe* in 1808 and wrote the sec manuscript history of the order in 1829, may even have revealed the identity Dr. Falk to Robinson. In one draft, Molitor gave the name of Dr. Falk, the *B Shem,* as one of the Sabbatian masters of the "Asiatics."[287] Robinson sha Molitor's sympathy for the Jews, and he became friendly with Lyon Goldsm whose ancestors had been the major patrons of Falk and whose relatives Germany were members of the *Morgenröthe.*[288] Robinson also attended Maso functions under the leadership of the Duke of Sussex, who continued to supp the *Morgenröthe* in its struggles against anti-Semitism in Germany. On 16 Ju 1831, Sussex issued an English Grand Lodge certificate for Heymann Wolfske a Jewish member of the *Morgenröthe* lodge at Frankfurt.[289]

Though the "Asiatics" apparently disappeared and the *Morgenröthe* v forced to sever its tenuous links with London in 1866, several veterans a investigators of the early movement survived into the early lifetimes of founders of the Golden Dawn. Prince Carl of Hesse-Cassel died in the midst an alchemical experiment in 1836, a convinced Rosicrucian to the end.[290] Moli wrote learned works on Kabbalism and its importance to Christians a Freemasons, and he lived until 1860.[291] Crabb Robinson, who made an exhaust personal study of German Freemasonry (which colored his interpretations Blake) died at age 92 in 1867.[292] Thus, the international eighteenth-cent

traditions of Dr. Falk, the Rosicrucians, and Swedenborgian Freemasonry had at least three lifelines into the Victorian Age. Within this context, which is a minimalist sketch of the complexities, the version of Blakean and Rosicrucian history that Yeats revealed in the 1890's has some plausibility. Moreover, the name-change of the Golden Dawn to *Morgenröthe* in 1902 may indicate some new awareness of the early history, as well as an escape tactic from contemporary sex scandals and political manipulation.[293]

Perhaps it is fitting to conclude this inquiry into the historical background of the Golden Dawn's "Unknown Superiors" with a string of questions. Was Kenneth Mackenzie, who boasted to Westcott of having "first hand evidence" of Falk's Rosicrucian affiliation, never to be trusted? He was, after all, a likely candidate to have learned about the *Morgenröthe*'s early Sabbatian roots in Vienna, where he studied and where he acted as a tutor in the family of Count Apponyi.[294] Westcott claimed that Mackenzie received Rosicrucian initiation from Apponyi in Vienna, but King asserted that MacKenzie was initiated by the count in Paris.[295] After serving as Austrian ambassador in London from 1824 to 1826, Anton Apponyi was transferred to Paris, where he worked until 1849.[296] Provocatively, Anton Apponyi was the son of Anton Georg Apponyi (1751-1817), who was an enthusiastic Freemason in Vienna at the time of "Asiatic" penetration of the order in the 1780's.[297] Apponyi *père* was the Masonic patron of Haydn and Mozart, during the period when the names of Ecker von Eckhofen and Hirschfeld appeared in lodge records as secret emissaries of the "Asiatics. Thus, it is quite possible that Apponyi *fils* did inform Mackenzie about the order's early history.

Mackenzie, who was an adolescent prodigy as a scholar, maintained contacts in German literary and antiquarian circles, and he may have learned of the *Morgenröthe*'s later troubles. Was it mere coincidence that he translated Lessing's *Ernst und Falk* into English and joined Samuel Beswick's "revived" Swedenborgian Rite of Masonry, which stressed Swedenborg's personal connections with Jacobite-Templar lodges?[298] After charges of forgery and deception circulated among warring members of the Golden Dawn in the early 1900's, Yeats expressed the growing confusion about Mackenzie's claims about Dr. Falk, the Rosicrucians, and the early German "Golden Dawn." In 1922 Yeats wrote:

> I am sorry to have shed so little light upon a matter which has importance, because in several countries men who have come into possession of its rituals claim, without offering proof, authority from German or Austrian Rosicrucians.[299]

Despite the current assumption among British Masonic scholars that Mackenzie invented the history and forged the manuscripts of the "German

Golden Dawn," it is possible that the original German manuscripts were four (or even survive) among the papers of the Duke of Sussex, who collected ar allegedly hid away Sabbatian and Rosicrucian materials. Finally, did Mackenz have any contact with Molitor? Before Mackenzie's "mendacity" can b assumed as absolute, these questions deserve more scholarly investigatio especially in Scandinavian and Continental archives.

And what about Gustav Mommsen, who wrote to *Notes and Queries* abo the connection of Dr Falk and the Golden Dawn of 1810? Was he any kin Theodore Mommsen, the great German historian who was then waging courageous battle against anti-Semitism in Germany?[300] Mommsen believed exactly the kind of religious syncretism and Jewish-Christian assimilation th the early *Morgenröthe* espoused. Would Westcott have blithely forged the nam of "Mommsen," which was well-known to readers of *Notes and Queries* ar British students of history?[301] Theodore Mommsen and his brother Augustu (Gustav?) both visited England in the 1880's.[302] An ancestor, "Dr. T. Mummsen had played a leading role in Swedish Rite Masonry in Prussia in the 1770's, ar the Mommsen family had an important association with Danish-Germa Schleswig, the home-base of Prince Carl of Hesse-Cassel in his last years.[303] W Mommsen seeking information on Dr. Falk as an "Unknown Superior" of tolerant, ecumenical Masonic system, as Mommsen himself struggled to brin the German Jew from a painful position of "Known Inferior" to full citizenship

Similar questions arise about Magregor Mathers, who developed th German cypher manuscript and the eighteenth-century rites of the "Asiatics into the impressive rituals of the Golden Dawn. Did Mathers have any access t the earlier traditions of Sabbatian-Swedenborgian Rosicrucianism? Mathe was "obsessed by Jacobite fantasies" and gave himself the ritual name "Roy is my Tribe."[304] His ancestor Ian Macgregor of Glenstrae fought in the 174 rebellion and then fled to France, where the merging of Jacobitism, Kabbalism and Swedenborgianism transformed the Freemasonry of the 1750's throug 1780's. While Mathers probed his Jacobite heritage, translated the *Kabbala Denudata,* and worked on German Masonic rituals, did he begin to piec together the complex history of Swedenborg, Falk, Cagliostro, and th *Morgenröthe*? Did his French Jewish wife, Moina Bergson, tell him of Falk continuing reputation as a revered *Baal Shem* in the Jewish communities England and Europe? Had they heard the story that in 1830, when Louis-Philli (son of Orleans-*Egalité)* became "King of the French," he was wearing th talismanic ring of Dr Falk?[305]

The fascination with Kabbalistic and Jacobite "Unknown Superiors ranging from the correspondent in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1737 to th correspondent at Fraulein Sprengel's postal address in 1887, fueled inquirie among imaginative artists, philosophers, and occultists for over two centurie

The overwhelming sense of *déjà vu* that afflicts the historian of the eighteenth-century roots when he explores the nineteenth-century ramifications leads to differing conclusions. For the rationalist historian, the recurrent similarities of the story – involving secret Jewish adepts, Masonic political intrigue, and mystical millenarianism – testify to the perennial credulity of artists and theosophers across the ages. For the "illuminated" historian, the recurrent similarities testify to the perennial vitality of the Jewish visionary tradition that nourishes and regenerates both Rabbinic and Christian orthodoxies. The Jacobite "wild card" thrown into the Kabbalistic and Rosicrucian game – like the King who "unseen Lurk'd" in Alexander Pope's game of *ombre* – links the players into the nostalgia and subversion of political lost causes.[306]

For Yeats and the would-be adepts of the Golden Dawn, the complex tradition of "Unknown Superiors" provided an exotic banquet of heterodox and *piquant* dishes. At the head of the table, in at least three incarnations, sat Dr. Falk, whose historic personality still provokes the question – was he "genuine or a knave"?[307] Perhaps Lessing best summed up the enigma when he had Ernst admit to Falk that all the magical and knightly tales proffered to the initiate were mere "tunas for young whales" – appetizers for the liberating intellectual feast to come.[308] Though odd voices were raised in alarm and disapproval throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, only the anti-Semitic Nazis would systematically work to eliminate the feast.

NOTES

This paper is an expanded version of a lecture presented at a conference on "The Golden Dawn: its Place in Cultural History," held at Regent's College, London (April 1987). More extensive documentation on the eighteenth century political and Masonic background will be presented in my book, *Emanuel, the Desire of Nations: Swedenbourg, Jacobitism and Freemasonry* (forthcoming).

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M.K. SCHUCHARD

10. DR. SAMUEL JACOB FALK: A SABBATIAN ADVENTURER IN THE MASONIC UNDERGROUND

The secretive and controversial personality of Dr. Falk, the "Baal Shem" of London, presents unusual challenges for the historian who tries to trace his movement through the shadowy underground of international "illuminist" Freemasonry. As the following contemporary quotations reveal, Falk's influence stretched from England to the far reaches of Russia, Algiers, and Italy:

> The famous Chaim-Schahul-Falck ... departed for England, where the Portuguese Jews of the highest reputation rendered him honors as their prince and sovereign pontiff ... [But] Parliament had him arrested in London, and afterwards he was released on condition that he would no longer kabbalize. (Comte de Rantzow, *Memoires* [Amsterdam, 1741])

> Cagliostro came at just the right moment for himself, when several lodges of Freemasons, who were infatuated with Swedenborg's principles, were anxious at all costs to see spirits; they therefore ran to Cagliostro, who declared he had all the secrets of Dr. Falk. (Catherine the Great to Baron Grimm [Moscow, 1781])

> As to the Kabbalah, all is upset by the unexpected death of Dr. Falk ... up to now I have found nothing certain relating to that famous Rabbi, whether he is genuine or a knave ... . Believe me, I have found news about that Jew, among the Jews of Algiers, and they ... attribute their success against the Spaniards to him – *Voila*! (General Charles Rainsford, M.P. [Harwich, 1782])

> Cagliostro perceived that their [Freemasons'] ceremonies were disfigured and disgraced by magic and superstition; the principles of Swedenborg, a Swedish preacher; and those of M. Falc, a Jew rabbi, are regarded as chiefs by the *illuminated.* (Report of the Vatican Inquisition [Rome, 1791])

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From the time of his youth in the 1720's, in Podhayce near the Polish-Turkish border, to his death in 1782 in London, Falk lived in a world of clandestine intrigues and shifting boundaries in politics, religion, and science.[1] Considered an ignoramus and charlatan by orthodox rabbis, he was revered as a master of the holy names of God by mystical Jews and theosophical Christians, who sought his kabbalistic instruction and assistance in medicine, alchemy, sexual magic, treasure-finding, lottery-predictions, and diplomatic intrigue. Reports of his magical and political exploits circulated in courts and lodges from London to Holland, France, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, and Algiers. The main communication line for these reports was the clandestine network of Franco-Scottish (*Écossais*) Masonic lodges established by exiled supporters of the Stuart dynasty, who were forced to flee Britain by the victorious Hanoverian regime. Compounding the secrecy maintained by "traitorous" Jacobites and by Freemasons generally was the fact that Falk was a crypto-Sabbatian, who maintained contact with "heretical" Jews in many countries. Thus, to decipher his kabbalistic and Masonic career requires investigation that stretches geographically throughout Europe and biographically through multiple layers of concealment.

From the first published report of his kabbalistic skills, in the Count of Rantzow's *Memoires* (Amsterdam, 1741), Falk was presented as a magical showman and psychic healer, who harbored quasi-messianic ambitions. In both Podhayce and Fürth, towns which "harboured centers of secret Sabbatianism," Falk developed a reputation as a supernatural wonder-worker, and his services were soon sought by various Christian aristocrats in Germany.[2] At Cassel he cured the epilepsy of a daughter of the Court Jew by means of kabbalistic talismans without any medication and, from a distance, he overturned wine barrels in a locked cellar.[3] When Jesuits complained that Falk's claims to find buried treasure were based on forbidden black magic and recommended that he should be burned, the Elector of Cologne banned him from his territory. Rantzow reported that Falk also performed a magical ceremony with a black goat before the Duke of Richelieu, French ambassador in Vienna, and the Count of Westerloh, during which Westerloh's valet had his head turned backward and died of a broken neck. However, Falk's alleged participation in this affair would later be rejected by his banking patrons, the Boas brothers at The Hague.[4]

Falk escaped the threatened *auto da fé* and found refuge with the Baron de Donop, Aulic Councillor of the Empire, who had witnessed his exploits at Cassel and scorned the hypocrisy of the Jesuits. At Donop's residence in Geilberg, Falk evoked an angelic spirit, which appeared in a burst of brilliantly colored lights, and conversed with it in Hebrew.[5] In Donop's park, Falk drew a large circle with his wand and filled it with magical characters; he then prayed in Hebrew until a flame rose from the ground and burned the tips of his hair. Falling to his knees, Falk prayed and pronounced the sign as favorable. In a repeated ceremony, Donop saw the ground open to reveal the roots of an oak tree stripped of bark and filled with a great quantity of gold. When Donop said it would be necessary to cut down the oak to retrieve the hidden treasure, Falk

replied that whoever ordered the cutting would die instantly.

After Falk performed more acts of kabbalistic magic – making his hunting knife float in the air and revealing more hidden gold – he urged Donop to convert to Judaism and thus be saved. When Donop asked for an explanation, Falk warned him of a universal war that would soon come to the whole earth and that would last more than thirty years. In the peace afterwards, there would reign universally as many princes as he had fingers on his left hand. In this prophecy, there was a foreshadowing of Falk's future millenarial and political ambitions.

Falk then moved to the castle of Rantzow's father, probably in 1736, where Westerloh, Donop, and other admirers of the kabbalist joined them. Rantzow *fils* was determined not to be gulled by Falk, but he was surprised that the Jew immediately perceived his unvoiced scepticism. "This new pontiff" told him he knew what Rantzow had in his soul and then chastised him for not believing in "our ancient Jews," of whom Jesus Christ said, "this race will never believe in me unless it sees miracles and signs." Falk then promised to show such phenomena to anyone stricken with incredulity. Rantzow replied that Falk spoke of the New Testament as if he was a Christian, to which Falk asserted that he had probably read it as much as Rantzow had. Rantzow, who admitted in his *Memoires* that he was not very devout, accepted Falk's boast but then asked how the Jew could remain in his error. In a remarkable rejoinder, Falk boldly asserted:

> I am so little in error ... and love it so little, that I work at freeing all my brothers from it. They are waiting for somebody to liberate them for the oppression and the slavery in which they are. The time is approaching, but I cannot say more about it. Your law assumes ... that we are rejected by the people elected by God. But one would have to prove to me that God, who is immutable, could change His decrees. It is quite apparent that He has not changed them with regard to our people, that we are actually under His hand which beats us on our heads like the hands of a father who punishes his children. The Christians bask in the glory of the world. The Jews are in ignominy, so that in a true sense they are the only Christians. The death of Jesus Christ has come about in order to announce to us a humiliating state, after which we must fill the earth, to the very ends of the universe, with the cry of the magnificence of God and the glory of the Jewish nation. This nation has withstood the injuries of all time, it preserved its name in unity, despite all the efforts of the powers of the earth. Unsuited to perform impostures, and very indifferent to the politics of the century, we do not count except in the thunder of heaven that will be detonated by the ministers of His vengeance. One should not say that we are blind. We always see the finger of God over our heads. Would you, Monsieur, cease to recognize your father as your father because he punishes you? Is not that chastisement the most beautiful sign which the true tenderness of a father can give? When a... the Jews will be humble of heart, in sackcloth and ashes, He shall respond with their deliverance.[6]

As Falk continued to demonstrate his skills to Rantzow's father and guests (making the castle shake to its foundations with thunderous noises, evoking a spirit with eyes that shone like the sun, producing a vision of a seated personage under the Hebrew word Jehovah and protected by the wings of cherubim, etc.), young Rantzow struggled to maintain his sceptical attitude and Christian belief. Finally, the reigning Duke of Brunswick-Luneberg wrote to Rantzow *fils* and ordered him to abandon the famous Falk, "sovereign pontiff of the Jews, descendant of King David, if one wants to believe it on the faith of a passport of the *Grand Seigneur*."[7] While Falk sought a new patron, Rantzow heard "from a very good source" that the Jew requested a great prince to give him refuge and the freedom to work at his Kabbalah for forty days. Falk even offered to have his work examined by such theologians as the prince deemed reliable to ensure that he did nothing except with the help of God. But the prince refused refuge to Falk and advised him rather to multiply bread for the poor than to augment the treasures of the rich. According to Patai, the forty days of work entailed alchemical processes.[8]

There is no evidence that Falk had Masonic contacts at this time, for the expansion of *Écossais* Freemasonry into Germany was just beginning.[9] However, when he left the Rantzow estate, he went to Holland, where he evidently made his first contacts with international adventurers who participated in secret diplomacy, espionage, alchemical fund-raising, and kabbalistic political predictions. Passing through Holland in 1736–39 were Theodore von Neuhof, the recently ejected king of Corsica, and Emanuel Swedenborg, Swedish scientist and intelligence agent, who were both active in clandestine Jacobite and Masonic intrigues and who would subsequently seek Falk's assistance.[10] Also living in Holland was a suspected Sabbatian, the exiled Italian savant Moses Luzzatto, whose kabbalistic theories evidently influenced Swedenborg.[11] Falk would subsequently own and cherish Luzzatto's books.[12] It was probably at this time that Falk met Simon and Tobias Boas, Jewish bankers and active Masons, who became his patrons and protectors. The Boases often assisted Swedish diplomats in political and financial affairs.[13]

From Holland, according to Rantzow, Falk moved on to England (circa 1737–40), "where the Portuguese Jews of the highest reputation rendered him honors as their prince and sovereign pontiff."[14] One of Rantzow's friends informed him from London that Parliament ordered Falk's arrest, but then released him on condition that he no longer practice Kabbalah. General Charles Rainsford, a British M.P. and Swedenborgian Freemason, later reported to a French Masonic research lodge that Falk was also censured for his kabbalistic indiscretions, apparently by certain Jewish authorities:

> ... they maintain that he had misemployed some knowledge (*connaissances*) which had been entrusted to him, and that for that reason he was punished, and obliged to pass the rest of his life in solitude, without daring to communicate his knowledge, which he had the imprudence to make apparent for ostentation.[15]

The parliamentary order and kabbalistic censure account for the extreme secrecy that Falk maintained about his continuing magical activities. Though little is known about his early years in London, until his servant Hirsch Kalisch recorded his activities in his diary of 1747–51, evidence emerges in the journals, correspondence, and diplomatic reports of other visitors to London which suggests that Falk became involved in a clandestine Masonic system that utilized Kabbalah and alchemy to support efforts to restore James Stuart, the "Old Pretender," to the British throne. These contacts came through French and Swedish agents, who provided secret intelligence and military support for the Jacobite cause. It was no coincidence that Baron von Donop's son, who witnessed Falk's exploits, was then in the military service of the Swedish king, and that the rare copy of Rantzow's *Memoires* in the Swedish Royal Library was owned and inscribed by Count Carl Gustaf Tessin, Swedish foreign minister and leader of *Écossais* Freemasonry. The Corsican "Pretender," Theodore von Neuhof, had earlier served in the Swedish army and acted as an intelligence agent in the Franco-Swedish-Jacobite Plot of 1716–18. All of these politically active Masons tried to exploit kabbalistic, Hermetic, and Rosicrucian techniques and networks in order to further their "patriotic" causes. Moreover, they believed that those causes had millenarial significance, for they would reverse the political and spiritual trends that usurped legitimate kings and upset God's ordained microcosmic order.

II

In order to understand why Falk – a defiantly proud Jew – would be attracted to Jacobite or Scottish-rite Masonry, it will be necessary to briefly trace the history of Jewish-Stuart collaboration in the early development of Freemasonry. From the sixteenth-century, the Stuart kings in Scotland were actively involved in ambitious architectural programs, and they worked closely with operative Masons, whose traditional craft lore drew on the *Sepher Yetzirah* and other works of Jewish mathematical-architectural mysticism and visualization (including the kabbalistic-Lullist Art of Memory).[16] James VI was initiated in the lodge at Perth circa 1600, and when he became James I of England in 1603, he brought Scottish Masonic interests to London.[17] A Scottish poem would proudly link Stuart Freemasonry with Rosicrucianism and the acquisition of prophetic powers ("second sight").[18] As "Mason Kings," James and his son and grandson considered themselves Solomonic monarchs and utilized Jewish visionary and ritual themes while they sought to rebuild the Temple of Wisdom in their kingdoms.[19] Their anti-Scottish opponents accused them of being "Judeo-Scots" – the heirs of those Jews banished from medieval England who found refuge in Scotland.[20] That the Scots did not eat pork was considered proof of their Hebraic lineage – a heritage that the Stuarts proudly accepted.

During the Cromwellian interregnum, when Menasseh ben Israel labored to open England to Jewish immigration, he was supported by various Protestant millenarians who expected (even demanded) that the Jews would eventually

convert to Christianity.[21] At the same time, when the exiled Charles II sought the support of royalist Jews in Holland, he made clear that he did not expect them to convert, and that he would grant them protection to live and worship *as Jews* under his restored regime. Many exiled royalists – especially the Scots – identified with the Jews of the Diaspora and adapted their mystical language of reclaiming Jerusalem (Britain) and rebuilding the Temple (a *virtuoso* culture based on art, architecture, and science). There is evidence of contact between Scottish Freemasons (such as Sir Robert Moray and Alexander Bruce) and Dutch Jews during the 1650's.[22] In fact, the puzzling tradition – based on now-lost documents – of a Masonic initiation carried out by Jews in Rhode Island in 1658 was probably linked to Sir William Davidson, a Scottish merchant and manager of Dutch Jewish trade with the colonies, who served as Charles II's liaison with Jewish sympathizers.[23] In Holland Davidson collaborated closely with the Masons Moray and Bruce in secret royalist projects. According to eighteenth-century Jacobite Masons, General Monck and the Scottish architect Sir William Bruce utilized these secret Masonic networks to organize the restoration.[24]

Throughout his reign, Charles II struggled to maintain religious toleration in Britain, despite the strong anti-Catholic sentiments of most of his subjects. As J.C. Riley observes, "Seventeenth-century Englishmen regarded Papists with much the same suspicion and hatred that Americans held for Communists in the late 1950's," though Romanists composed less than two percent of the English population.[25] Grateful to Jewish supporters of his restoration, Charles granted royal protection to the Jews and personally guaranteed their right to practice their religion freely (despite attacks on the community by Protestant extremists). In 1665 this Jewish-Stuart affiliation was recognized in a Masonic document which featured Hebrew lettering, Jewish symbolism, and Stuart loyalism.[26] In 1675, after the conclusion of the Anglo-Dutch war, Rabbi Jacob Judah Leon – a probable member of the earlier Davidson-Moray circle – traveled from Amsterdam to London to exhibit his famous model of the Jerusalem Temple.[27] In an introductory pamphlet, Leon praised the Stuarts for their support of his work and for their respectful attitudes towards the Jews. Armed with recommendation letters from Constantijn Huygens (Moray's old friend and fellow Mason) to Christopher Wren and the Earl of Arlington (both Masons), Leon reportedly met and conversed with the king as a Masonic brother and an equal.[28] While in London, he also designed the coat of arms for the restored Masonic fraternity, and his design would later be resurrected by devotées of "ancient" Stuart Freemasonry in London.

After the 1688 expulsion of James II – who had promised full religious freedom to Catholics, Dissenters, Quakers, and Jews – many royalist Jews in England and on the Continent remained loyal to James's "Jacobite" partisans.[29] Francis Francia, known as "the Jacobite Jew," worked for the Stuart cause from 1702 until 1750, acting as financial manager of the Swedish-Jacobite plot of 1716 and organizing a "club of noble Jews" that was probably a Masonic lodge, for Francia was listed as a Freemason.[30] The exposure and defeat of the Swedish-Jacobite plot, which included a Masonic component,

provoked a counter-reaction by supporters of the Hanoverian regime. Thus, in 1717 four lodges in London joined together to form the Modern Grand Lodge, which vowed loyalty to George I's government and devotion to Newtonian-Whig science.[31] Over the next decades, Jacobites and Hanoverians maintained rival Masonic systems that struggled for dominance in Britain and abroad. Though Masonic histories in English have tended to glorify the Modern Grand Lodge system in Britain, Continental historians argue that the "Ancient" Jacobite system attracted more recruits in the rapidly expanding *Écossais* lodges in Europe and the New World. Moreover, the "Ancient" system was especially attractive to Jews because of its emphasis on Hebraic mystical lore.[32]

It was in the Jacobite systems that the older kabbalistic and Rosicrucian traditions were preserved and embellished. Thus, the *Écossais* Masons sometimes solicited kabbalistic Jews to share their occultist knowledge. The secret enclaves of Sabbatians, whose antinomian theosophy allowed them to pretend sympathy for Christianity, provided fertile soil for these Masonic questers. It is even possible that Francia, like Rabbi Leon's sons, harbored Sabbatian sympathies, for he alternated between Jewish and Christian identities. In the 1690's in Amsterdam, Leon Templo*fils* contributed his father's Temple drawings to Wilhelm Surenhuys for a Latin edition of the *Mishna*, and these designs subsequently emerged in the Masonic tracing boards used in *Écossais* lodge rituals.[33] During the same period in London, the tenure of Rabbi Solomon Allyon initiated a clandestine Sabbatian sub-culture, which maintained links between fellow sectarians in London and on the Continent. Like the Jacobites, who were considered seditious rebels and traitors by the reigning Hanoverian government, the Sabbatians were considered rebels and heretics by the reigning orthodox rabbis. In the murky underworld, where both "outlawed" parties operated, they sometimes found interests and ambitions in common. Thus, Dr. Falk's appearance on the *Écossais* stage was a new but not unprecedented act in the long-running drama of the "Judeo-Scots."

III

At the time when Falk first passed through Holland in the late 1730's, the leader of the Moravian Brotherhood – Count Nicholas Zinzendorf – was sponsoring a *Judenmission*, in which Moravians lived in the Jewish community in Amsterdam and tried to find a *via media* between Judaism and Christianity through mutual study of Kabbalah.[34] By the early 1740's, when the *Judenmission* extended operations to London, the Moravians were publicly accused of having links with the Jacobites and Freemasons. One participant in the Moravian outreach to the Jews was Emanuel Swedenborg, who had earlier been influenced by the Christian kabbalism of Rabbi Johan Kemper, a crypto-Sabbatian, who was evidently his Hebrew instructor in Uppsala.[35] Since then, Swedenborg had visited Jewish synagogues and communities in Prague, Hanover, and Rome. In 1743–45 he lived incognito in Amsterdam and London, where he participated in Moravian rituals, studied Kabbalah, was initiated into the Jacobite Masonic degrees, and established contact with local Jews.[36]

Swedenborg had long demonstrated mild symptoms of interictal epilepsy (the Geschwind Syndrome), in which he periodically stuttered, trembled, swooned, saw visions, wrote obsessively, and developed messianic notions.[37] While ill with a high fever (or a more severe seizure) in London, he proclaimed to his Moravian companion that he was the messiah, that he had come to be crucified for the Jews, and that he must go to the synagogue to preach. The frightened Moravian took the delirious Swedenborg to Dr. William Smith, a specialist in epilepsy and mental illness, who drew on Jewish medical traditions and kabbalistic hypnotic techniques in his treatment.[38] Smith was a friend of Dr. Falk, who also treated epilepsy and "spirit possession," and he probably provided Swedenborg with an entrée to the secret world of the Baal Shem.[39]

In his *Journal of Dreams*, recorded in London, Swedenborg hinted at his participation in Falk's magical rituals performed "on a bridge over water," and he often visited Falk's neighborhood near Wellclose Square, where (by happy coincidence) the Swedish church was located.[40] Falk would later occupy a large mansion in Wellclose Square, where he maintained a private synagogue and public tabernacle, and Swedenborg sometimes stayed in the King's Arms Tavern in the square. Owned by Eric Bergström,[41] a Swede with Moravian connections, the tavern was the meeting place for a French-affiliated lodge that welcomed Jewish members. Perhaps inspired by Falk's own millenarial predictions, Swedenborg wrote a messianic treatise (published posthumously) that linked Jacobite with Jewish dreams of a return to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Temple.[42]

In 1744–45 Swedenborg's political party (the pro-French "Hats") secretly cooperated with the Stuarts and utilized *Écossais* Masonic networks for secret communications and arms shipments. Despite widespread anti-Semitism in Sweden, Swedenborg's political mentors also hoped to open their country to Jewish immigration, and they undertook top-secret negotiations with Jewish agents on the Continent and in England. At The Hague the Swedish ambassador Joachim Preis – a close friend of Swedenborg – worked with the Boas brothers on the Jewish immigration project, at a time when the Boases acted as patrons of Dr. Falk. For many *Écossais* Masons and their Jewish friends, there seemed to be a new convergence of interests and opportunities. As the charismatic young prince Charles Edward Stuart prepared to sail for Britain, at the head of a Franco-Swedish-Jacobite invasion force, he planned a manifesto promising complete religious freedom. A draft was penned by Voltaire, with the advice of the Swedish ambassador in Paris, Count Carl Frederick Scheffer, a Freemason and close friend of Swedenborg.[42] Thus, despite Hanoverian propaganda that painted the Jacobites as authoritarian Papists, Prince Charles revived the earlier Stuart policy of religious liberty that must have appealed to many Jews, for their co-religionists in England had actually lost privileges after the so-called "Glorious Revolution" of 1689, when William III did not include the Jews in his policy of limited toleration.[43]

I argue elsewhere that Swedenborg and Falk became associated with a clandestine Jacobite system, the "Rite of Seven Degrees," brought from Rouen to London in 1743–44 by the French military officer and engraver Lambert de

Lintot – a system that utilized the kabbalistic and Hermetic sciences for restoration projects.[44] Like Swedenborg, De Lintot apparently received a subsidy from the secret diplomatic fund of Louis XV, who also sent the Rosicrucian adventurer and crypto-Jew known as the Comte de Saint-Germain to serve as a Jacobite-Masonic agent in London. Saint-Germain may even have met Falk, through their mutual friend Dr. De la Cour, a wealthy Jewish physician, who often brought curious Christians to meet Falk.[45] De Lintot's Masonic rite drew on the universalist Christian kabbalism of the Chevalier Andrew Michael Ramsay, and he developed elaborate, higher degrees involving kabbalistic meditation techniques that enabled the initiate to transmute sexual arousal into visionary ecstasy.

Many of De Lintot's Masonic engravings survive, and some hint at the kabbalistic sexual theosophy that was revealed in the secret instruction of his system. Under its Jacobite name, the "Rite of Heredom of Kilwinning," one engraving featured nude females dancing around phallic pillars, with the note "Nothing without the V Point," a reference to the vulva or kabbalistic *Shekinah*.[46] In Swedenborg's dream diary, he referred to his practice of intense meditation which produces an erection, which he tries to maintain without ejaculation.[47] Similarly, in Falk's dream diary, he described his student Cosman Lehman enacting a phallic ritual in which he achieves an erection but then spoils it by ejaculating in different directions.[48] As Wolfson explains, certain techniques of intense meditation by kabbalists allow them to see visions and experience intense erotic pleasure.[49] Among some radical Sabbatians on the Continent, meditation on the *Shekinah* was accompanied by ritualized masturbation, much to the horror of orthodox critics.[50] In the state of sexual arousal and psychic trance, the adept sometimes received prophetic illumination about current and future political affairs – which attracted the attention of politically minded diplomats and Masons.

In 1783, one year after Falk's death, General Charles Rainsford, who had been collaborating with Falk on a highly secretive kabbalistic-masonic scheme, received inquiries from Parisian Masons about the system of Falk and De Lintot, whose papers and regalia Rainsford acquired. Falk had earlier listed himself as a member of the lodge "Observance of Heredom, Scotland."[51] In answer to a question about the ritual term "Heredom," Rainsford replied cautiously that it did not refer to an actual mountain in Scotland but rather to the Jewish symbol for *Mons Domini* or *Malchuth*, the tenth *sephira* of the kabbalistic system. Following the note "Cabala" and the Hebrew letters for *Malchuth*, Rainsford explained:

> The word "Heridon" [sic] is famous in several degrees of masonry, that is to say, in some invented degrees (*grades forgés*), or in degrees of masonry so-called. Apparently, the enlightened brethren who have judged it proper to make the law, that Jews should be admitted to the Society have received this word with the secrets (*mystères*) which have been entrusted to them.[52]

Rainsford's smoke-screen reply, combining hints at higher mysteries with

scoffing at their legitimacy, was typical of "illuminist" replies to outside inquiries. Moreover, he was an officer in the British army and had to be discrete about his associations with Jacobite and foreign Masons.

Meanwhile, the crushing of the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 drove its sympathizers further underground, while the Hanoverian victors launched a propaganda campaign against the Judaized Jacobites and their Masonic henchmen (led by the Whig journalist Henry Fielding). In his government subsidized *Jacobite's Journal* (1747–48), Fielding linked Masons, Jacobites, and Jews as seditious and untrustworthy residents. Despite the loyalty displayed by most Jews, led by Samson Gideon who saved the Bank of England during the "panic of '45," Fielding hinted at his awareness of the secret Jacobite sympathies of other Jews. This was especially threatening to Falk and his clandestine *Écossais* associates. Expressive of the lingering resentment felt by many Whigs at the "Jacobite Rabbins" who pledged their loyalty to James II in 1685, Fielding claimed that the Jacobite Scots had circumcised themselves after the Battle of Culloden and joined their Jewish allies for revolutionary purposes:

> I have often amused myself with comparing the People called the *Jacobites* with the People called *Jews*; between whom I find a stricter Analogy than perhaps can be discovered between any other two Sects ... it is the unhappy Fate of both these People, who have been alike deprived of their own divinely constituted Kings, to live under Governments which they hold to be damnable and diabolical, and no Allegiance nor Submission due to them: But, on the contrary, are daily hoping and looking for their Destruction.[53]

Despite the need for intensified secrecy, which leaves so much of the "illuminist" underground difficult to trace, Dr. Falk emerges from the shadows through the diary of Hirsch Kalisch, his semi-literate servant, whose jottings in 1747–51 make it possible to place the Baal Shem among his fellow kabbalists, Masons, and political intriguers in London.[54] Still acting as an intelligence agent, Swedenborg returned periodically to London and recorded descriptions of a Jewish magician that matched in all details Kalisch's portrayals of Falk.[55] As Swedenborg began anonymously publishing *Arcana Coelestia*, which was subsidized by Louis XV, he carefully distanced his kabbalistic scriptural interpretations and notions of cosmic sexuality ("conjugial love") from his Jewish sources.

Dr. Falk's most important visitor, however, was King Theodore I, who was a hero to the Jews because of his declaration of religious freedom in Corsica and his invitation to Jews to settle there.[56] However, since his military expulsion from Corsica, Theodore had struggled to support himself through kabbalistic and Hermetic performances, while he linked his restorationist cause with that of the Stuarts. Arriving in London in late 1748–early 1749, Theodore possibly sought out Swedenborg, whose diplomatic mentors had long supported Theodore's schemes. He also sought Falk's magical assistance, and the impoverished Baal Shem believed that he was finally on the way to economic and political power. Often accompanied by Dr. Smith, Theodore received

kabbalistic talismans and predictions from Falk, whom he paid with funds he had collected from Continental supporters. Eventually, Theodore ran out of money and was arrested for debt; however, his unusually long prison sentence was probably provoked by the government's concern about his Jacobite intrigues (carried out with his Irish brother-in-law Killmallock). While in prison, Theodore continued to initiate sympathizers into his neo-Masonic "Order of Deliverance," and fellow Masons such as David Garrick and Horace Walpole tried to help him. Through Garrick's international theatrical visitors, Theodore – and Swedenborg – met Masonic actors from France and Russia, who returned to their home lodges with tales of Falk and the clandestine Jacobite Masonic rites in London.

While Theodore languished in prison, the young Stuart prince – now lionized as "Bonnie Prince Charlie" – caused a diplomatic sensation when he disappeared from Avignon and began a secretive, restless search for supporters in Germany, Poland, and Sweden. The Jacobite Masons, who believed that the prince was made Grand Master of the Templar Masons at a ceremony in Holyrood Palace, tried to provide him with hiding places and communication networks.[58] Many French Masons were ashamed of Louis XV's harsh treatment of the prince, and they secretly sent funds to his supporters. Falk's association with the Royal Order of Heredom, which claimed Prince Charles as its Grand Master and maintained links with the French Grand Master (Comte de Clermont) and his elite *Rose-Croix* rite, perhaps explains his contacts with ambassadors from France, who visited him in London, supplied him with French funds, and took his disciple Cosman Lehman back with them to Paris.

In 1756 there was a revival of "Ancient" Jewish-Stuart Masonic links in London, when Laurence Dermott – an Irish Mason – placed a notice in the *Public Advertiser* about a meeting of Royal Arch Freemasons in a tavern on Capel Street, "near Wellclose Square." The location was significant, for Dermott actively recruited Jews to his system and wove kabbalistic and Jewish symbolism into Royal Arch rituals.[59] To replace the *Constitutions* published by the "Modern" Grand Lodge, Dermott published *AHIMAN REZON*, which included "the Prayers to be used in the Jewish and Christian Lodges ... together with Solomon's Temple and Oratoria." Dermott studied the papers of Rabbi Leon "Templo," in the possession of Leon's grandson, and he reiterated the claim of Charles II's Masonic role. In the 1764 revised edition, he added the story of Rabbi Leon's visit to Charles and reproduced the Jew's Masonic coat of arms (adopting it as the "Ancients" emblem). Dermott also described a dream vision, in which a white-bearded Jew wearing a golden breastplate revealed the Solomonic origins of Freemasonry. With Dr. Falk living right around the corner from the Royal Arch lodge, it is tempting to see him as the original of the dream-figure. Over the next years, Dermott studied Hebrew, probably with Falk or the Buzaglo brothers, fellow Sabbatians and Masons.[60]

The "Ancient" and "Royal Arch" system gained many recruits, who avidly studied Kabbalah in order to rise through its mystical degrees. For Falk, this philo-Judaic Masonic development opened new opportunities. Despite the

failure of his enterprise with King Theodore (who died in 1756), his sense of power was enhanced by local Masonic attention and French aristocratic overtures. He began to show the proud defiance of his earlier days with Rantzow. When Kalisch angered him, Falk boasted that he could destroy with his magical powers not only Kalisch and his father but half of Poland. Fortunately, Falk calmed down, for Poland soon became a major factor in his growing reputation as a Baal Shem.

As the Stuart prince spent eight years of incognito wandering, he sought the support of Polish nationalists, who chafed under the Anglo-Russian domination of their country. Son of a Polish mother and now supported by the exiled former king Stanislaus Leszczynski, Prince Charles was viewed as a legitimate candidate for the Polish throne in 1757.[61] He especially won the admiration of the princes Lubomirsky and Czartorisky, leaders of *Écossais* Freemasonry in Warsaw and avid students of Kabbalah. Both princes had contacts with Sabbatian Jews, and Czartorisky was criticized as "a half-Sabbatian" (*ein halber Schöps*).[62] Prince Marius Lubomirsky would later marry a Sabbatian and convert to Judaism. Then, in 1758, a wave of messianic expectation swept Poland, as Jacob Frank – a crypto-Sabbatian with messianic pretensions – encouraged his followers to convert *en masse* to Catholicism. The Czartoriskys and their Masonic allies welcomed the *Zoharites* to the "new" Poland, and there would be increasing exchange between Masonic kabbalists and the Frankists.

Meanwhile, in London, Zinzendorf and the more radical Moravians were intrigued by the events in Poland, and they sent emissaries – including a Jewish Moravian – to link up with the Frankists' millenarial crusade. Falk was probably aware of this Moravian outreach, for Kalisch stayed in touch with his family in Moravia. In Hamburg and Frankfurt, a shadowy group of Masons was also stirred by these Frankist developments, and they organized the "Gold-und-Rosenkreutzer" brotherhood, who solicited Jewish assistance as they they worked for kabbalistic regeneration, alchemical transmutation, and millenarial consummation. Among their recruits were Johannes Müller and J.C. Oetinger, who both developed Rosicrucian relationships with Swedenborg.[63] Müller also maintained mysterious contacts with Rabbi Jonathan Eibeschütz, a crypto-Sabbatian and friend of Falk.[64]

The spread of Sabbatian heresy became so alarming to orthodox rabbis that they mounted a propaganda and persecution campaign against the "rebels." In Hamburg Rabbi Jacob Emden determined to expose not only the Sabbatian but the Christianizing intrigues of the new enthusiasts. Rabbi Moses David, an old friend of Falk from Podhayce, fled to London, where he found refuge in Wellclose Square. Another visitor, Susman Shesnowski, wrote to his son in Poland to describe the activities of the two kabbalists, and he hinted that Falk possessed not only magical but messianic powers:

> Hear, my beloved son, of the marvellous gifts entrusted to a son of man, who verily is not a man, a light of the captivity, who hath set his heart to gather the dispersed of Ariel ... . His name is Samuel Falk ... who dwells at present

in London ... he wrote an explanation of his words to the worthy Moses David, the aged and renowned Cabbalist who formerly dwelt in Podhayce and was then famed as a Baal Shem ... . He now dwells in the shadow of the aforementioned saintly man ... . In Cheshvan he withdrew into his house near the bridge. His house was entirely closed ... and there he abode about six weeks without food, drink, or sleep, or kindling any fire. In the sixth week ... he directed that ten learned men should assemble, who had purified themselves by immersion in the Ritual Bath. At midnight we came to his house, and then donned white surplices. On Wednesday he bade the Cabbalist, Moses David, write in his notebook. Then he directed another member of the Brotherhood ... to kindle the light of two candlesticks. When Moses had completed writing he asked the company to enter the chamber barefooted. Lo! and behold, the saintly man was seated on his throne arrayed like an angel of heaven, diademed with a golden mitre ... .This is the saintly man who, according to my poor understanding, stands alone in our generation, for he knows the mystery of our Law and does wondrous things ... . I am grateful that I have been received into this Brotherhood, who by their piety can hasten the advent of the Messiah ... . My son, be very circumspect, and show this only to wise and discrete men. For here in London, this matter has not been disclosed to any one who does not belong to our Brotherhood.[65]

Moses David, who was awed by Falk's performance, wrote a dangerously explicit letter to Eibeschütz, in which he described the magical deeds of the holy man Falk, "who is still human but already above human."[66] It is unclear whether David believed that Falk was *the* Messiah or the major messenger of the Messiah's coming; certainly, he believed that Falk was the man of the age who would usher in the new millenarial era. After some months, David returned to Eibeschütz's yeshiva in Altona, where the enemies of the Sabbatians stepped up their attacks. They claimed that David indulged in antinomian rituals, so that "Everybody who is unholy did turn him [Falk] into a Messiah because he is unholy." Though Falk had "entrapped" many wealthy Jews and Christians, in order to raise money for the Brotherhood, the orthodox rabbis expelled his colleague David, who had "broken the tablets of *Haon*." The later confiscation of David's amulets – with references to Falk, Eibeschütz, Baruchia, and Sabbatai Zevi, while featuring a Christian cross – revealed that the Brotherhood aimed at some kind of syncretism between Sabbatianism and Christianity.[67]

The turbulent year of 1759 ended with the cancellation of the projected Franco-Jacobite invasion of Britain, which the foreign minister Choiseul had planned as the largest military operation in French history. Swedish, Polish, and Jacobite agents who had participated in the clandestine arrangements were thrown into disarray, as their carefully cultivated links with Masons, Jews, and dissidents lost their political-military goal. However, Falk's expanding international connections were not forgotten, and individual aristocrats increasingly sought his magical and Masonic assistance for their political ambitions. From

1764 onward, Falk received the patronage of the wealthy Goldsmid brothers, who also became Masons.[68] Increasingly affluent from his investments in French funds and lottery winnings, Falk could now afford to play a more ambitious political role.

In 1771 Ludwig IX, Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt and a territorial Grand Master of Masonry, corresponded with Swedenborg about his political predictions and the state of various spirits in the afterworld.[69] Not satisfied with Swedenborg's brief answers, the Landgrave subsequently sent his Jewish agent, Simon Van Geldern (great-uncle of Heinrich Heine) to London to solicit instruction from Falk.[70] Though Falk and Van Geldern apparently did not get along, Ludwig later affirmed that "in his youth he worked with a Jew believed by him to have been a pupil of Falc."[71]

Another possible visitor to Swedenborg and Falk in 1771 was the Jewish savant Mordechai Gumpel Levison, who came from Berlin to London in order to pursue medical studies.[72] According to Beswick, Swedenborg had recently visited a Masonic lodge in Berlin, where he met the Prussian army physician Johann Christian Theden, a Rosicrucian Mason, who became a friend and protector of Levison.[73] Theden may have informed Levison that Swedenborg was in London, for Levison subsequently became a Swedenborgian.[74] Levison studied under the Scottish physicians William and John Hunter, who were Masons and Jacobite sympathizers. The brothers were interested in Swedenborg's theories and had contacts with his local devotées. William owned Swedenborg's *Economy of the Animal Kingdom*, while John collaborated with Peter Woulfe, a Swedenborgian alchemist who befriended Levison.[75] It seems likely that Levison's Hebrew work, *A Dissertation on the Law and Science* (1771), was influenced by Swedenborg's as well as Linnaeus's theory of correspondences.[76]

Levison also met Dr. Smith, mutual friend of Swedenborg and Falk, who would subsequently sponsor the Jew's medical accreditation from Marischal College, Aberdeen.[77] As a youthful protégé of Eibeshchütz, Levison perhaps heard of Falk's reputation as a kabbalistic healer and was then introduced to him by Smith. If Levison was associated with the crypto-Sabbatian circle of Eibeschütz and Falk, it would explain the hostility of orthodox rabbis to his alleged heretical views and sexual improprieties. Levison was accused of consorting with "the bad Abish," who was "one of the wisest men of his generation; the two companions "conspired to destroy Judaism" by their antinomian behavior.[78] Graupe suggests that "Abish" referred to Eibeschütz, though it could also refer to the latter's *confrére*, Falk. Over the next decade, Levison collaborated with the Swedish *illuminés* who infused alchemical and kabbalistic theories into William Blake's Swedenborg Society.[79]

In 1771–72 a visiting French Mason, Phillipe Jacques de Loutherbourg, painted Swedenborg's portrait and – allegedly – Falk's, which features the Baal Shem proudly holding Masonic compasses while drawing a kabbalistic talisman.[80] After Swedenborg's death in London in February 1772, Falk visited the Boas brothers at The Hague, where he attended meetings of the French-affiliated "Indissoluble" Lodge.[81] Rumors about his and Swedenborg's con-

tributions to the higher degrees spread through Europe and Scandinavia.

Since his accession to the Swedish throne in a bloodless coup in 1772, Gustav III – a patron of Swedenborg – made Freemasonry an instrument of state and worked diligently to expand the Swedish Rite into foreign countries – especially in hostile Russia and Prussia, where initiates loyal to the Swedish Grand Master would form a pro-Swedish fifth column.[82] The Swedes claimed to possess certain hieroglyphs that provided the key to the kabbalistic secrets hidden in the old Judaic wisdom books – evidently a reference to De Lintot's engravings and Falk's revelations.[83] By dangling the bait of rare magical arcana before would-be adepts, the king's agents were able to attract many Masons in various countries to the Swedish Rite. Gustav's usage of Masonic networks was part of an obsessively secret strategy to protect Sweden from foreign invasion and domination.

Gustav was especially worried about the tragic fate of Poland, which he viewed as prophetic of Sweden's vulnerability. Thus, he supported the nationalist rebellion led by Prince Adam Czartorisky, which was crushed by Russia and Prussia. Like the Swedish royalists, the Polish nationalists utilized international Masonic networks to support their cause. In 1772 a desperate Czartorisky visited Tobias Boas at The Hague, and then both men traveled to London to solicit Falk's magical and financial assistance. Moving on to Paris, Czartorisky called on the Duke of Chartres, Grand Master of the Grand Orient system of French Masonry, and probably informed him about Falk. In 1773 a new link between Falk's and Swedenborg's theosophy was initiated by the Marquis de Thomé, who established a Swedenborgian Masonic lodge in Paris and subsequently studied Kabbalah under Falk. In 1774 the old *Écossais* network was weakened when De Lintot's lodge succumbed to pressure from the British government and voted to remove the Stuart Pretender from his position as Grand Master of the Rite of Heredom of Kilwinning.[84]

It was perhaps this new development that prompted Falk to visit France in 1775, when his name appeared on a Parisian lodge list.[85] After his visit, the powerful Grand Master Chartres traveled to London to receive Falk's kabbalistic support for his reformist political agenda. Falk consecrated a talismanic ring that would ensure Chartres' rise to the French throne. But Falk's most significant pupil in London was a lowly Sicilian painter named Joseph Balsamo, who evidently came from a Marranist background and harbored kabbalistic and Masonic ambitions. Balsamo may have met Swedenborg, Levison, and Falk during his first visit to London in 1771, for he later referred to Swedenborg in personal terms and his alchemical theories would be noted by Levison.[86] On a return visit in 1776, Balsamo worked with Falk to develop the "Egyptian Rite," a new Masonic system infused with Swedenborgian theosophy and kabbalistic symbolism. Assuming the name "Count Cagliostro," the former Balsamo and Falk visited a Masonic lodge at The Hague in 1777, where they launched a remarkable campaign to recruit Swedenborgian and *Écossais* Masons in many countries to the Egyptian Rite.

General Rainsford recalled his own visit in 1777 to "my friend Boas the Jew banker" at The Hague:

> ... in conversing with one of the sons, we fell upon the topick of Dr. du Falk, the famous Cabalist, who I had heard a great deal of both at *Harwich* from the Captain of the Packets, at *Helvoet Sluys*, and at *Maasland Sluys*, and found him in high repute at all three places, for the Propriety of his Behavior and Sanctity of his Manners and, as well, from the the respectable Character he appeared in of a venerable Rabbi of great Benevolence & Charity, but knowing that the *Boas* family had a particular Knowledge & Correspondence with him, I questioned the Son about him ... . The Jew made no Hesitation to answer my Questions, and enter minutely into his Character ... .[87]

Boas recounted his conversation with Falk about Rantzow's *Memoirs*, and Falk assured him that he really performed "the very singular and surprising" magical feats, but that "at present he would not or dare to attempt them." Nevertheless, Falk was a "most profound Cabalist and a very holy man," who had formerly been distressed for money but that Lehman had helped him "by various Means, sometimes not so creditably." Rainsford was pleased to hear about Falk's moral influence on the formerly dissolute Lehman, who was his close friend and who was "now at Versailles, in close connexion with the Chev. de L——g [Luxembourg] and the Prince de Tingri [Pingré]." The latter two were high-ranking French Masons.[88] Rainsford planned to use Boas's information for some kind of Masonic project he hoped to launch.

During the same year (1777) in Russia, Bourrée de Corberon – a French diplomat – was informed that Dr. Falk was considered "the Old Man of the Mountain" and the source of the deepest kabbalistic-masonic arcana, which he revealed to Thoux de Salverté, now a leading Mason in Poland.[89] Falk's alleged connection with the medieval sect of Assassins would send a *frisson* through the lodges of would-be magicians and political power seekers. Thus, when Cagliostro left The Hague and travelled to *Écossais* and Swedenborgian lodges in Germany and Lithuania, he was welcomed as the emissary of the "Great Cophta," whose identity as Falk was revealed only to elite adepts. In 1778 Gotthold Ephraim Lessing – an initiate of the Swedish Rite – published his Masonic dialogues, provocatively titled *Ernst und Falk*, and some readers assumed that his portrayal of the character Falk as a kabbalist and political manipulator was based on the Baal Shem of London. When the Russian Masons asked Cagliostro for the hieroglyphs engraved by Lambert de Lintot, Falk made a raid on the "Heredom" lodge and sent the hieroglyphs to Moscow.[90]

Rival Masons and critics charged that Cagliostro was a crypto-Jew, who hoped to overturn existing religious and political norms in the name of a transcendent, liberationist, universalist culture. While Cagliostro was in Europe in 1781, the "Great Cophta" allegedly convinced the Scottish radical, Lord George Gordon, to convert to Judaism and join their Masonic campaign.[91] Another bizarre actor in the drama of the "Judeo-Scots," Gordon's partisans had unleashed riots that almost destroyed London, in order to prevent the recruitment of Catholic troops to use against the American

revolutionaries. The fact that a Russian dissident participated in the Gordon Riots alarmed Catherine the Great, who looked upon Gordon and subsequently Cagliostro and Falk as international revolutionaries. Thus, when Cagliostro arrived in St. Petersburg, Catherine sent her spies to glean information on his plans. On 9 July 1781 she reported to Baron Grimm that Cagliostro came at just the right moment for himself, when "several lodges of Freemasons, who were infatuated with Swedenborg's principles," ran to Cagliostro, "who declared he had all the secrets of Dr. Falk."[92] Stating that her "hands itched to flog Cagliostro," the Empress succeeded in driving him out of Russia; she later lampooned him and Falk in the portmanteau character of "Kalifalkerston" in her anti-Masonic comedy.[93]

Cagliostro claimed that Gustav III implored him to visit Sweden, but he may have learned that Levison's role as a court alchemist and medical professor in Stockholm had recently come to an unhappy end.[94] Resisting Gustav's invitation, Cagliostro travelled instead to Poland, where he tried to recruit Masons from the rival political systems then struggling for dominance. The nationalist Masons in Warsaw complained that only Falk and Jacob Frank were true masters of Kabbalah, and they lamented the lack of expert instruction in their lodges.[95] Moving on to Strasburg, Cagliostro collaborated with Jean Benoit Scherer, a former friend of Swedenborg, and Frederick Rudolph Saltzmann – both prominent *Écossais* Masons. Saltzmann reported that Cagliostro had high praise for Swedenborg, who had been persecuted in Sweden, but that the greatest man in Europe was Dr. Falk.[96] Currently in London there were five or six Masons who possess "*connaissances*" (evidently De Lintot, Rainsford, and their colleagues), but they lack the Falkian key to the hieroglyphs. Saltzmann concluded that Cagliostro seemed Jewish, but he was not sure.

By 1782, through Swedenborg's legacy and Cagliostro's work, Falk had become revered and feared as *the* Unknown Superior of revolutionary Freemasonry. An international convention of Masons, meeting at Wilhelmsbad, determined to learn more about him. As Savalette de Langes, royal treasurer in Paris, reported to a French delegate:

> Dr. Falc, in England. This Dr. Falc is known to many Germans. From every point of view he is a most extraordinary man. Some believe him to be Chief of All the Jews, and attribute all that is marvelous and strange in his conduct and in his life to schemes which are entirely political ... . There has been a curious story about him in connection with Prince de Guemene and the Chev. de Luxembourg relating to Louis XV. whose death he had foretold. He is practically inaccessible. In all the higher Sects of Adepts in the Occult Science, he passes as a man of higher attainments ...[97]

Savalette further reported that Cosman Lehman, pupil of Falk, was now with the Duke of Luxembourg (who would later become Grand Master of the Egyptian Rite).[98] Ambassador Waldenfelds of Wetzlar and Baron von Gleichen of Copenhagen also know Falk and should be questioned. In Gleichen's

memoirs, he reported on Madame de la Croix's kabbalistic "prowess" which enabled her to counter Falk's political assistance to the Duke of Chartres. She boasted that by her magical prayers she shattered the talismanic ring that Falk gave Chartres, which "disappeared in the middle of the National Assembly."[99]

Savalette and the delegates at Wilhelmsbad also hoped to get information from London, but the chief English representative – General Rainsford – could not attend because of military duties in Algeria. While there, he heard stories of Falk's magical powers that had helped the Algerian Jews in their successful struggle against Spain. He also noted, "I have found some rather curious MSS. in Algiers in Hebrew relating to the Society of *Rosicrucians*, which exists at present under another name with same forms. I hope moreover to be admitted to their true knowledge."[100] When he returned, Rainsford hoped to work with Falk on the development of the "Asiatic Brethren," a Rosicrucian form of Freemasonry, whose initiates dreamed of developing a new kabbalistic religion that did not require conversion of Jew or Christian but would transcend all sectarian divisions.[101] The rumors (inaccurate) that Falk and Levison converted to Christianity were probably provoked by their association with this Judeo-Christian order.

As Gershom Scholem and Jacob Katz have shown, the "Asiatic Brethren" represented a politically bold, imaginatively colorful, and spiritually innovative attempt to utilize collective kabbalistic meditation and Masonic ceremony to bring about millenarial change.[102] According to a manuscript history by Franz J. Molitor, the "Asiatics" drew on the thaumaturgic traditions of Sabbatian kabbalists "such as Sabbatai Zevi, Falk (the *Baal Shem* of London), Frank, and their similar fellows."[103] This linkage between Falk and Frank would subsequently be noted at the *Philalèthes* convention in Paris.[104] However, General Rainsford reported sadly in October 1782, "As to the Kabbalah, all is upset by the unexpected death of Dr. Falk."[105] Having followed Falk's career since the 1740's, Rainsford was still not sure whether he was "genuine or a knave." The question remains posed.

For the Catholic Inquisition, who imprisoned Cagliostro as a seditious Freemason in 1790, his unholy merger of Swedenborgianism and Falkian Kabbalah threatened Christendom. While undergoing torture, Cagliostro accused his former heroes of perverting Masonry. He claimed that while he was in Courland, he perceived "here as elsewhere" that the Masons' "ceremonies were disfigured and disgraced by magic and superstition," based on the principles of Swedenborg and Falk, who were considered chiefs of the "illuminated" Freemasons.[106] He "wished to undeceive them, and to initiate them into the rites of his Egyptian masonry." While Cagliostro languished in an Alpine prison, the French Revolution deteriorated into the Terror and international warfare. Though reactionary critics would see in "illuminated" Freemasonry the source and vehicle of revolution, other veterans of *Écossais* experiments in psychic and spiritual liberation remained privately loyal to their earlier ideals.

Rainsford remained intrigued and puzzled by Falk's character, but he also made clear why so many Jews and Christians hoped that Falk could lead them

to a kabbalistic illumination that would reveal the secrets of the universe and usher in a better world. "Perhaps I am too visionary and too eager for the great secret," Rainsford wrote, but "whilst the World is employed in cutting throats on the one hand, one is well in the right to honour God and study his Works on the other."[107] After Falk's death, Rainsford worked with other illuminist Masons in London to establish the Masonic Universal Society, which transmitted the millenarial dreams of Swedenborg, Falk, Frank, and Cagliostro into the artistic milieu of William Blake and from there into the revival of *Rose-Croix* Freemasonry in the literary milieu of William Butler Yeats.[108]

For artists and poets, Falk and his kabbalistic heirs offered visionary techniques that elevated the mind and body into transcendent realms. For anti-semites like Édouard Drumont, Benjamin Fabre, and Nesta Webster, Falk and his henchmen created a vast Jewish-Masonic conspiracy that threatened the established religions and governments of Europe.[109] Thus, whether genuine or a knave, the Baal Shem of London remained a potent imaginative and political force well into the twentieth century.

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NOTES

1. *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* 26 (1902–05), 148–73; Solomon Schechter, "The Baal-Shem, Dr. Falk," *Jewish Chronicle* (9 March 1913), 15–16; Cecil Roth, "The King and the Cabalist," in idem, *Essays and Portraits in Anglo-Jewish History* (Philadelphia, 1962), 139–64.
2. Michal Oron, "Dr. Samuel Jacob Falk and the Eibeschuetz-Emden Controversy," in *Mysticism, Magic and Kabbalah in Ashkenazic Judaism*, ed. Karl Grözinger and Joseph Dan (Berlin and New York: Walter de Grutyer, 1995), 243–56.
3. [Jörgen Ludwig Albrecht Rantzau], *Memoires du Comte de Rantzow, ou Les Heures de Récréation à l'usage de la Noblesse de l'Europe* (Amsterdam: Pierre Mortier, 1741), 198–208. I have examined copies of this extremely rare volume in the National Library in Paris and Royal Library in Stockholm; so far, no copy has been located in Britain or the USA.
4. Gordon P. Hills, "Notes on Some Contemporary References to Dr. Falk, the Baal Shem of London, in the Rainsford MSS. at the British Museum," *Transactions of Jewish Historical Society of England* 8 (1915–17), 124.
5. Rantzow, *Memoires*, 202–03.
6. *Ibid.*, 199–201. I use the translation of this passage in Raphael Patai, *The Jewish Alchemists* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994), 457–58.
7. Rantzow, *Memoirs*, 221–22.
8. R. Patai, *Jewish Alchemists*, 461.
9. For the best accounts of Jacobite or *Écossais* Freemasonry on the Continent, see René Le Forestier, *Les Illuminés de Bavière et le Franc-Maçonnerie Allemande* (Paris: Hachette, 1915); Pierre Chevallier, *Les Ducs sous l'Acacia* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1964), *La Première Profanation du Temple Maçonnique* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1968), and *Histoire de la Franc-Maçonnerie Française* (Paris: Fayard, 1974), vol I; René Le Forestier, *La Franc-Maçonnerie Templière et Occultiste au XI[illegible]e et XIXe Siècles*, ed. Antoine Faivre (Paris: Louvain, 1970).
10. For Falk's contacts with Swedenborg, Theodore, and other Freemasons, see the extensive documentation in my article, "Yeats and the Unknown Superiors: Swedenborg, Falk, and